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Arab-Israeli Talks

New Round of PLO-Israeli Talks Begins in Cairo

Sha'th Comments Before Talks

NC1704120994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Apr (MENA)—The Palestinian and Israeli negotiators today began a new round of negotiations to overcome obstacles preventing the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement for Palestinian self-rule.

The talks began with a separate meeting between Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser and head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, and General Amnon Shahaq, deputy chief of staff and head of the Israeli delegation, to draw up the agenda for this round of negotiations, which is expected to continue until Thursday.

In a statement to correspondents beforehand, Dr. Sha'th said: We will do our best to make this round the last. He noted that they will continue to discuss the topics discussed in previous rounds, particularly those pertaining to security and water. Dr. Sha'th expressed the hope that agreement will be reached with the Israeli delegation on these issues.

Regarding the impending meeting between Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in Bucharest on Friday, Dr. Sha'th said its original purpose was not to try to overcome the obstacles in the current negotiations in Cairo. It will take place on the sidelines of the world economic conference, which will discuss economic cooperation in the Middle East in the era of peace.

The Security, Civilian, and Legal Affairs Committees are expected to meet later today.

Palestinian Official on 1st Session

NC1704164794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1522 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Apr (MENA)—Palestinian and Israeli negotiators meeting for talks to eliminate the obstacles impeding the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho accord on self-rule have wound up their first session, during which they continued the discussion of security issues.

Khalid al-Qidrah, a member of the Palestinian delegation, told MENA that the Security Affairs Committee held a two-hour meeting chaired on the Palestinian side by Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya and on the Israeli side by Uzi Dayan, head of the Israeli Army's Planning Department. He added that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues concerning crossings between Gaza, Jericho, and Israel; joint Palestinian-Israeli patrols on parallel roads; the settlements' security; and other security topics. He said the Civil Affairs Committee, which will basically deal with water and communications, and the Legal Affairs Committee will meet later today.

Al-Qidrah said that during the previous round the Israeli side presented a working paper to the Palestinians on the legal jurisdiction in Gaza and Jericho. He affirmed that the paper has been rejected because it is not in line with the regional sovereignty of the self-rule authority.

He added that during this round the Palestinian side on the Legal Affairs Committee will submit a working paper on the legal and judicial jurisdiction and regional sovereignty. He noted that the Palestinian side demands full jurisdiction and sovereignty over the Palestinian territories.

He said: The Israeli paper, which was presented to us at the end of the last round, was not discussed. He affirmed that the Palestinian side rejected it completely.

Al-Qidrah rejected Israel having any legal jurisdiction in Gaza and Jericho, even on non-Palestinians as long as they are present in the territories under the Palestinian self-rule authority, noting that the Israeli proposal is incompatible with international law.

This round of negotiations, which opened this morning, is expected to last until Thursday.

Talks Continue; Sha'th Notes Agenda

NC1804061894 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] Palestinian and Israeli negotiators will today continue the talks they began in Cairo yesterday. The talks aim to resolve some unsettled issues concerning the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation, said the current talks focus on the release of detained Palestinians, crossing points between both Gaza and Jericho and Israel, and joint Palestinian-Israeli patrols. Sha'th added that any delay in the implementation of the Declaration of Principles will increase the suffering of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. He expressed hopes of progress in the current round of talks, which will last until the end of this week.

Sha'th on Delay of Return of Palestinians

NC1804055694 Paris AFP in English 0240 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, April 18 (AFP)—The return of around 50 banned or wanted Palestinians to the occupied territories, scheduled for Sunday [17 April], has been delayed by formalities, the Palestinian chief negotiator Nabil Sha'th said late Sunday.

The difficulties are being resolved and the exiles could be brought together in Egypt or Jordan Monday from where they could be transferred to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, Sha'th told reporters here.

The delay resulted from the fact that Palestinians who were outside Jordan and Egypt needed to gain visas for the two countries, said Sha'th, who is leading negotiations with Israel on Palestinian self-rule on the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank town of Jericho.

An official from PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat's Fatah organisation said 17 out of the 50 Palestinians would have gone to Gaza from Egypt Sunday but for the technical problems.

A first group of 50 banned Palestinians returned to the occupied territories on April 5.

Sha'th on Israeli Jurisdiction 'Compromise'

NC1804060094 Paris AFP in English 0250 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, April 18 (AFP)—The PLO has rejected an Israeli compromise proposal on the scope of Palestinian jurisdiction in parts of the occupied territories slated for Palestinian self-rule, the chief PLO negotiator said early Monday [18 April].

Nabil Sha'th was speaking at the opening session Sunday [as received] of the latest round of Israeli-PLO negotiations aimed at implementing Palestinian autonomy on the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank town of Jericho.

He said Israel had proposed that Palestinian jurisdiction extend to all foreigners—non-Israelis and non-Palestinians—in Gaza and Jericho, apart from those who travel there to visit Jewish settlements.

In another offer, according to Sha'th, Israel suggested that a Palestinian charged with a crime against an Israeli be tried before a Palestinian court if he is arrested in the autonomous areas and before an Israeli court if he escapes and is captured in Israel.

Israel had initially wanted to maintain jurisdiction over all foreigners as well as over any Palestinian charged with a crime against an Israeli.

"They tempered their first proposal, which I have called a horror," Sha'th said. "It is now a horror on a minature scale but still it is a horror."

He charged that Israel's position on jurisdiction was "a clear violation of the Declaration of Principles," referring to an autonomy agreement signed last September by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

"From our point of view, the only (areas) out of our jurisdiction are Israelis and settlements."

He disclosed that an electronic surveillance system will likely be used to resolve the issue of Palestinian movement between Gaza and Jericho.

The proposed route linking the two sites would extend from Eretz, bordering the Gaza Strip, and then pass through Ashqelon in southern Israel and Hebron on the West Bank, entering Jericho south of Jerusalem.

Sha'th also said that Israeli and PLO negotiators had begun discussions Sunday on water sharing but declined to release details.

But he added: "It's not really that much of a problem. It can be solved."

Sha'th stressed that that PLO was still pressing for a general amnesty for all Palestinian prisoners held by Israel, estimated to number 10,000.

Israel announced last Tuesday that it would agree to free 5,000 prisoners following the approval of a final autonomy accord, excluding Islamic militants in the Hamas movement.

Hamas has claimed responsibility for two recent bomb blasts that killed 12 Israelis.

"What we are discussing is a general amnesty," Sha'th said. "We cannot accept that Israelis tell us that people who are imprisoned because of their resistance in the past to an illegal occupation should remain in jail indefinitely, even after an agreement is signed."

Multilateral Talks on Water Begin in Oman

Israeli Delegation Arrives

TA1504154094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] The Israeli delegation for the multilateral talks on water has arrived in Oman. They were greeted by Omani Foreign Ministry officials. The talks are due to get under way on Sunday [17 April]. The Israeli delegation is headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, who is expected to meet with senior Omani officials during his stay.

Beilin said on his arrival that the visit is important because it broadens Israel's horizons, enabling the country to reach new areas.

The Israeli team flew to Muscat on an Egyptian plane from Cairo and not on a direct flight from Israel.

Talks Open With Call for Stable Supplies

NC1704100594 Paris AFP in English 0838 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Report by Nadim Ka'wash]

[Text] Muscat, April 17 (AFP) - Officials from Israel, Arab states, and other countries and organisations opened talks on water resources here Sunday [17 April] with a call by Oman for an agreement to ensure stable supplies.

Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yusuf Ibn-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah said water was one of the most important issues being negotiated in the region, as he opened the session at Muscat's Intercontinental Hotel.

Social and economic development plans required an agreement among all the countries of the Middle East to manage water resources and develop secure and stable supplies, he told the participants.

Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin was heading the Israeli delegation at the talks, due to last four days. It is the first ever visit to a Gulf Arab state by Israeli officials.

The water committee is one of five set up within the framework of the Middle East peace negotiations.

The talks on water resources are the first to take place in a Gulf country. It is the fifth session since the multilateral meetings began, following the 1991 Madrid peace conference.

"We had not expected such hospitality and warmth here," said a member of the Israeli delegation of more than 15 officials, accompanied by 20 journalists. "We are really impressed."

Another Israeli delegate said he had "the impression that the barriers between all the people of the region could come down and we can become friends."

Beilin met the head of the Omani delegation on Saturday to discuss the agenda of the meeting.

Conference sources said the Israeli delegation had threatened to boycott the meeting following a Palestinian delegate's statement that the PLO and Israel had agreed to set up a National Palestinian Committee to manage Palestinian water resources.

"The Palestinian delegate later corrected his statement and said the committee was part of the autonomy agreement. His earlier comments implied a Palestinian state", said an Israeli journalist who spoke to Beilin.

The Israelis are also due to attend a meeting on arms control in Qatar early next month, and a tourism conference in Dubai this year, officials said.

'Alawi said Oman had finalised studies with international help to upgrade water desalination facilities. The studies were presented to the meeting.

"We hope this effort will be a successful beginning for serious research to develop water desalination," he said.

"Such an achievement will also contribute greatly to preventing the danger of potential conflict over water resources. There is no doubt such a trend requires joint cooperation, especially with industrialised countries which have the experience and technology in this field".

Oman's Bin-'Alawi Addresses Conference

JN1704160994 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] His Excellency Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs, has opened the fifth meeting of the water committee within the multilateral talks stemming from the Middle East peace conference. The conference, which was opened at the Muscat Intercontinental Hotel this morning, is attended by 42 states, in addition to the Sultanate of Oman, and three international organizations—the United Nations, the European Union, and the World Bank.

At the beginning of the four-day meeting, His Excellency Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah delivered a speech in which he said: As the Sultanate of Oman today hosts the meeting of the water resources group within the multilateral talks of the Middle East peace conference, it strongly expresses its firm conviction of the importance of continuing the march of peace.

His excellency added that the sultanate's support for the peace process in the Middle East is based on a longstanding conviction that resolving the Middle East problem and its crux, the Palestinian cause, can only be achieved through direct dialogue and serious talks among the involved parties.

His excellency stressed that the convening of this meeting reflects the concern of the participant states in continuing their support and their valuable contribution to support the peace process. At the same time, he added, the meeting is an opportunity for the delegations to continue their constructive discussion, which they began in previous meetings, regarding water problems in the Middle East.

His excellency the minister of state for foreign affairs said: The multilateral track of the peace process concentrates on the details. We, in the water group, however, aim at preserving the scarce sources of water resources and concentrate on the importance of developing and creating new techniques in the service of water. We must realize that the work done by the water resources group is one of the most important factors of cooperation among the Middle East countries for many essential reasons, the most important of which is the limited water resources in the region. Therefore, the plans for social and economic development require that all Middle Eastern countries agree on policies to manage water resources and distribution and to secure stable water supplies.

His excellency said: In light of this, the Sultanate of Oman carried out a comprehensive survey to learn about the standards reached by water desalination research and technology in the world, which it was charged with by the committee during the Beijing meeting, to lay down options to reduce the financial burdens resulting from water desalination.

His excellency said: The document, which will be presented to you and which was the production of this survey, represents a distinguished technical achievement by a group specialized experts and is the result of positive common work thanks to the valuable cooperation demonstrated by your countries.

He added: On this occasion, we would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to those experts and to all those countries who contributed to the success of this study, which has come up with specific proposals and recommendations which will be detailed by the Omani delegation participating in this meeting.

The minister of state for foreign affairs expressed hope that this effort will be a successful beginning for serious scientific research to develop water desalination technology so that it will be used in ways that will have positive effects on the economic development in the Middle East. His excellency noted that such an achievement will also largely contribute to curbing the danger of potential conflict over water resources. He added that this trend requires constructive collective cooperation, especially with advanced industrialized countries that have genuine experience in this regard.

His excellency said: We have passed the stage in which we considered the mere holding of a meeting between us an achievement. We are aware of the fact that these very important multilateral meetings should be in harmony with what is achieved in the bilateral tracks of the peace talks by laying down sound foundations for tangible cooperation over mutual interests and common views regarding the issues of the region, which are the main topics of the multilateral talks.

His Excellency Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah stressed that participants from the region know full well that we have made a progress in this peace process and reached the threshold of a new stage that requires initiatives aimed at building bridges and achieving interconnection among the partners of peace. Therefore, the multilateral working groups and committees should work to reinforce their role and efficiency to support the bilateral track of the peace process and to continue to lay down practical plans and views that will achieve common benefits for all parties in an atmosphere of peace and stability.

Beilin on Palestinian Water Authority

*TA1704154894 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1400 GMT 17 Apr 94*

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, in Oman, by Ya'el Dan in Israel—live]

[Excerpt] [Dan] Where are we catching you? Are you finished with the first day of deliberations or are you still in the middle of it?

[Beilin] The first day of deliberations is actually over.

[Dan] How were you impressed by the statements made at the opening session, particularly the remarks of the Omani foreign minister? Do you think they are important?

[Beilin] Yes, definitely. I think the Omani foreign minister's remarks reflected how vastly interested the Gulf countries are in the water issue. It is not just another topic of discussion, but a critical issue to their future. They spend a fortune on water, and they definitely want to make every possible effort to increase their water resources and lower desalination costs. In this respect, the conference here is very important. Oman has been subjected to the criticism of several Arab countries which were not thrilled about Qatar and Oman hosting such conferences. The Omani foreign minister defended the hosting of the conference and spoke in very positive terms about the political process in the Middle East and the wish to put an end to the Israeli-Arab conflict and bring about normalization.

[Dan] Could you tell us what happened today? How much progress did you make?

[Beilin] Today we heard statements by individual and blocs of countries about specific projects in the region. Although we are talking about small-scale projects, I believe these deliberations will for the first time culminate in concrete agreements about new projects and their financing. Oman proposed to concentrate all worldwide information about water desalination in Muscat, seeing that it conducted a very secret study on the issue. I think this proposal will meet with unanimous approval. In any case, we have already expressed our consent.

The Palestinians raised the question of a water authority in the context of the Oslo agreement, and we expressed our consent to this matter as well, as long as the authority remains within this context and the multilateral forum [sentence as heard]. The Europeans and the Americans specifically mentioned several projects which could be executed shortly. We proposed to discuss projects dealing with water saving and the prevention of leaks from water mains. The general atmosphere is very positive and everybody has remarked on the positive attitude of the participants toward the issues raised so far. At this point, there has not been even a trace of confrontation, contrary to previous conferences which there fraught with very high tension.

[Dan] I would like to confirm that I understood you correctly. Did you definitely say that Israel agreed to the establishment of an independent Palestinian water authority? To the best of our knowledge, Israel has so far opposed such a move.

[Beilin] Israel agreed in principle—and this is also stipulated in the Oslo agreement—to the establishment of Palestinian authorities within the framework of the Declaration of Principles [DOP] signed on 13 September 1993. In their statements this morning, the Palestinians asserted that their water authority conforms with the criteria spelled out in the DOP. The moment they clarified this, we expressed our consent to such an authority. [passage omitted]

Israel, Oman Reach Accord on Solar Energy

TA1804062294 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Report by Aharon Barne'a from Oman]

[Text] Addressing the multilateral water talks yesterday, Omani Foreign Minister Yusuf Bin-'Alawi said that it is time to stop emphasizing the very fact that the conference is being held and to start acting. Thus, a mere few hours later, the Israeli delegation and the Omanis reached an agreement—the first of its kind—on regional Omani-Israeli cooperation in solar energy development. Israeli experts will visit an Omani solar energy center in about two weeks, and Omani solar energy experts will visit Israel several weeks later to promote the issue. Thus, Omani-Israeli cooperation on solar energy is to be launched in the coming weeks.

So far, all the Israeli proposals at the multilateral talks have been submitted through third parties, but today Israel itself will submit a proposal on a project for sea water desalination for small towns.

Inter-Arab Affairs

League Delegate Calls Israel's Stance 'False'

NC1704150594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1240 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Apr (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid today received Nayif Sa'ud al-Qadi, Jordan's ambassador in Cairo and permanent delegate to the Arab League.

Ambassador al-Qadi stated afterward that he briefed Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid on Jordan's true stance on the peace process. He described the Israeli stance as false, noting that the intention is to pressure Jordan.

He added that he conveyed to the Arab League secretary general the text of the Jordanian cabinet's statement on the (?latest) Israeli (?statements).

Kuwaiti Parliamentarian Reacts to Iraqi Initiative

NC1704161894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Apr (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid met today with a Kuwaiti delegation led by Ahmad al-Nassar, a member of the Human Rights Committee in the Kuwaiti National Assembly. The delegation includes Qattam al-Jumhur, a member of the assembly's Missing Persons Committee [Lajnat al-Murtahanin]; Du'ayj al-'Anzi, chairman of the National Committee for POW's; and Muhammad al-Haddad, a member of the National Committee for POW's.

Following the meeting, al-Nassar said he discussed with 'Abd-al-Majid the latest developments on the POW's in Iraq, praising the Arab League stance on this issue.

Al-Nassar reacted to Iraqi Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi's announcement in Sanaa yesterday that Iraq has revoked its decision to annex Kuwait and make it the 19th governorate. The Kuwaiti official affirmed that his country has received no official Iraqi offer to revoke the decision on annexing Kuwait or to invite a Kuwaiti parliamentary delegation to visit Baghdad to discuss the POW problem.

He said Kuwait refuses to engage in a "political game" with Iraq away from the UN and Arab League resolutions.

He added that Kuwait cannot give an opinion about the Iraqi initiative until it is authenticated, particularly since Iraq has made it a habit of raising "untrue issues," as he put it.

Touching on the Kuwaiti POW's in Iraq, al-Nassar said that the case is now in the hands of the international community and that worldwide efforts are under way to release them. He remarked, however, that Iraq is not cooperating.

Du'ayj al-'Anzi, for his part, noted that Iraq denied holding any Iranian prisoners and then released thousands of Iranian POW's. He affirmed that Kuwait has presented documents to the Arab League, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the Nonaligned Movement confirming that a large number of Kuwaiti POW's are being held in Iraq. He hoped the League's efforts will succeed in solving this ongoing problem.

Islamic Affairs

ICO Condemns Serb Actions in Goradze

LD1704133494 Riyadh SPA in English 1259 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Jeddah, April 17, SPA—Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (ICO) Dr. Hamid al-Ghabid has urged the United Nations Security Council to take effective steps to guarantee Serbian compliance with its resolutions on the protection of safe areas in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina especially in the surrounded Moslem enclave of Gorazde.

In a statement issued here Saturday [16 April], the ICO said the barbaric attack on Gorazde, the murder of personnel of United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), hampering United Nations humanitarian missions, seizing heavy weapons and the near massacre of thousands of Moslems living in areas protected by the United Nations should provide enough proof of the Serbs' complete defiance of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Al-Ghabid pointed out that these horrible acts not only pose a serious threat to the international community, but represent a permanent disgrace to the entire civilised world.

He said the view that NATO should remain neutral represents the ultimate appeasement of Serbian aggressors and reflects their scorn of relevant powerful organizations.

He called on the Security Council to issue a mandate for immediate action including air strikes by NATO against Serb aggressors to prevent the fall of Gorazde and the spread of the conflict to other areas like Zeppa and Srebrenica.

He said the Security Council should also reinstate the Bosnian republic's right to self-defence.

He warned that a massacre of Moslems in a United Nations protected area would have grave consequences on the whole region and seriously damage the authority of the United Nations.

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 5 Apr

NC1804101094

[Editorial Report] The following review of the 5 April issue of Cairo 'AQIDATI summarizes articles that are Islamic in nature.

CONTENTS:

1. Awqaf Minister Praised for Confronting Extremism
2. Secularists' Criticism of Religious Practices Refuted
3. Religious Seminar Stresses Adherence to Religion
4. Al-Azhar Mufti Explains Position on Progeny Cloning
5. Turkish Islamic Party's Strong Showing in Election Viewed

AWQAF MINISTER PRAISED FOR CONFRONTING EXTREMISM

In a 400-word article on page one, Samir Rajab, the newspaper's board chairman, praises the religious seminars organized by the Awqaf Ministry throughout Egypt to explain true Islam and protect the youth from extremist ideas. He says the Awqaf minister, through those seminars, took action "when minds were ready to receive that bad extremist thought." When the minister found that there was no point in dealing with the extremists themselves, he instructed that the broad bases in schools, universities, and factories be addressed. "The results were very promising. Honestly, without that effort many would have fallen in the quagmire, far more than those who are pointing their guns at the chests of our sons and daughters, desecrating our women, and indiscriminately destroying private and public property."

SECULARISTS' CRITICISM OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICES REFUTED

An approximately 2,000-word article by al-Azhar professor Dr. 'Abd-al-Jawad Sabir Isma'il on page six essentially reacts to an article entitled, "Who Is the Apostate?" which Isma'il says he read in some newspaper. Isma'il, who does not identify the newspaper or the writer, begins by stating that one of the "bizarre phenomena" these days is that some writers who know nothing about Islam are writing in newspapers about religious issues, making mistakes and telling lies, and trying to harm Islamic clerics and level false accusations against them.

Commenting on a claim in the article that religious sermons and preaching recorded by some ulema on audio cassettes contain material that is almost destructive to the country, Isma'il says: "Those ulema, in fact, were the reason for a religious and national awakening that is no secret to anyone. The destruction feared by the writer of that article will only be the destruction of corruption, treason, agentry, and apostasy." Isma'il adds: "Had the writer of that article been fair, he would have drawn the reader's attention to another area where cassettes are used: to promote vice and eliminate ethics and virtue. But this is not in the interest of the secular approach, which defends everything Western, even vice."

The author also refutes claims that there is an attempt "to establish Islamic priesthood" in Egypt. He says this is a big lie because Islam eliminated priesthood as it did idols. "Muslim ulema receive the credit for their knowledge, and we have never known in history, or in this contemporary age, a scholar who so sanctified himself or who people held as holy." He says this fact was understood by the orientals, who called those specializing in religion and its sciences ulema.

Isma'il also defends Shaykh al-Ghazali, whom the writer of the article allegedly tried to discredit, saying that he rejects the implementation of shari'ah. Preparing individuals and groups for shari'ah rule, says Isma'il, does not mean rejecting the implementation of shari'ah.

—A 200-word article by Ibrahim Nasr on page 23 says linking Islam and extremism is no longer justified after the confessions of repentant terrorist 'Adil 'Abd-al-Baqi on television. The writer says: "It is very regrettable that some tendentious people who hate Islam are trying to fish in troubled waters and use the confessions as a pretext to foolishly confuse right and wrong, good and bad, and to harm any religious trend." The writer notes that one of the things that made the terrorist repent was a book he read for imam al-Ghazali. He says Egypt is full of sincere and renowned ulema, but they are all viewed by the "tendentious" ones as terrorists. The writer addresses those tendentious ones: "Die in your fury, Egypt will remain Islamic. Islam is its official religion, Islamic shari'ah is its main source of legislation, and holy al-Azhar will continue to stand as fast as towering mountains against both the extremists and the deviants alike."

RELIGIOUS SEMINAR STRESSES ADHERENCE TO RELIGION

An approximately 1,500-word report on page four gives an account of a religious seminar organized by the newspaper in a Cairo mosque. Men of religion answer questions posed by the audience on religious and civil matters, such as marriage, mosques, prayers, and family affairs. Speakers reportedly stress the role of the mosque in Islamic education and maintain that "religion is the spirit of this people, the source of their power, and the basis of their unity. Without adhering to our religion and acting accordingly, we cannot solve our problems."

AL-AZHAR MUFTI EXPLAINS POSITION ON PROGENY CLONING

A 1,500-word report by Amal Hasan on page 14 cites Shaykh 'Atiyah Saqr, head of al-Azhar's Fatwa [religious ruling] Committee, as saying that Islam is a religion of science. He encourages scientific research as long as it observes three conditions: legitimate purpose, legitimate means, and belief that things can only happen under God's order and will. He tells a medical seminar that "cloning, if meant to improve the selection of the species and treat some kinds of infertility, and the use of genetic engineering to treat cancer and some hereditary diseases, are no problem." He adds: "If cloning is aimed at producing males instead of females, or females instead of males, or at forming human progenies as needed, then it is a major mistake."

TURKISH ISLAMIC PARTY'S STRONG SHOWING IN ELECTION VIEWED

Page 21 contains an 800-word comment by Ashraf Abu-al-Hawl on the results of the Turkish municipal election in which the Islamic Welfare Party made a strong showing. The writer notes Western anxiety over the results of the election. Although the Welfare Party is not a fundamentalist Islamic party in the sense we know it in Egypt, he writes, "The enemies of Islam, both in Turkey and abroad, rushed to attack it fiercely and to belittle its achievement. Indeed, they implicitly called for outlawing the party under the pretext of fear for freedoms and the democratic achievements of the secular state." The writer maintains that Turks "began to feel that the current Turkish crisis is caused by the enemies of Islam, who divided the Turks on nationalist grounds, tried to isolate Turkey from its historical Islamic roots, and promoted the idea of European Turkey."

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 8 Apr

NC1704175094

[Editorial Report] The following review of the 8 April issue of Cairo AL-SHA'B summarizes articles that are Islamic in nature.

CONTENTS:

1. Journalist 'Abd-al-Sattar Abu-Husayn Held in Military Prison
2. Journalist's Detention Linked to Report on Bright Star Exercises
3. Hamas Claims Responsibility for 'Afula Operation
4. Article Attacks Communist, Secular Writers
5. Article by 'Adil Husayn
6. Call for Trial of Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali
7. Egyptian Human Rights Organization
8. U.S. War on Egyptian Exports
9. Islamists Win al-Mansurah University Elections

JOURNALIST 'ABD-AL-SATTAR ABU-HUSAYN HELD IN MILITARY PRISON

An 800-word report by Mahmud Bakri on page 1 says "the campaign against the newspaper AL-SHA'B has reached its peak in the past few days." Journalist 'Abd-al-Sattar Abu-Husayn was arrested at his home at 2300 on 4 April and was then subjected to extensive interrogation at the office of the military public prosecutor. The report goes on to say that "in an unprecedented move in the history of military justice," he was brought before a military crime court in al-'Abbasiyah less than 24 hours after his arrest. Without mentioning the charges brought against him, the report says the concerned authorities prevented defense lawyers from attending his interrogation, which was held in "complete secrecy." The authorities also prevented his relatives and journalists from AL-SHA'B and other newspapers from visiting him in the military prison. The report adds that several journalists staged a sit-in at the Press Association on 6 and 7 April to protest his arrest. The journalists issued a statement denouncing the "ferocious onslaught" on the newspaper AL-SHA'B. Furthermore, the report says police forces arrived twice on 6 April at the newspaper's premises on the pretext that there were "scuffles and sit-ins" within the premises. The report adds that the police force continues to have an "intensive security presence" around the premises.

JOURNALIST'S DETENTION LINKED TO REPORT ON BRIGHT STAR EXERCISES

An 800-word editorial entitled "Abduction" by Chief Editor Majdi Ahmad Husayn sheds light on the reasons for the arrest of AL-SHA'B journalist 'Abd-al-Sattar Abu-Husayn. The chief editor says at first it was feared that the journalist was kidnapped by arms merchants because he wrote an investigative report [AL-SHA'B issue of 22 March] that he had honestly copied from U.S. newspapers on investigations being held by the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Justice Department on commissions paid on U.S. arms deals with Egypt. However, by 6 April it became clear that he was being held by the military authorities because he wrote a report in AL-SHA'B on 1 April on the presence of U.S. and European military officials in Cairo to arrange for the Bright Star Exercises. The chief editor says he received an order from the information minister's office on 6 April banning the newspaper from publishing further reports on this subject.

HAMAS CLAIMS RESPONSIBILITY FOR 'AFULA OPERATION

The newspaper publishes a 500-word report by Muna Yasin on page 1 entitled "Palestinian Mujahidin Avenge the al-Haram al-Ibrahimi Massacre." The mostly factual report says Hamas has claimed responsibility for the car bombing of a bus in 'Afula in northern Israel in which eight Jews were killed and 52 others were wounded, saying it was in retaliation for the Hebron massacre. The report then cites a Hamas statement that was broadcast on Radio Monte Carlo on 7 April. In the statement "Hamas asks the inhabitants of the occupied territories to stock up on foodstuffs in preparation for a stage during which the country will face an all-out war in a very short time." In the statement, Hamas also "appeals to 'Arafat to postpone the talks with Israel for one year with the promise that it will force the occupation troops to withdraw without conditions from the West Bank and Gaza Strip within this period."

ARTICLE ATTACKS COMMUNIST, SECULAR WRITERS

A 900-word article by Dr. Mahmud Himayah, director of the Preaching Department of the School of Religion in Asyut, comments on the government decision to ban Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Kafi from delivering Friday sermons. He says, "the remnants of communists and secular people" are behind the campaign against men of religion in Egypt. They control the media and have close ties with high-ranking government officials. They attack such prominent preachers as Shaykh al-Ghazali, Shaykh al-Sha'rawi, and Shaykh 'Abd-al-Kafi. Even the grand iman of al-Azhar has not escaped their insults. They do this in the name of "fighting extremism" and safeguarding "national unity." Dr. Himayah says the "great calamity" is that these secular writers have become so influential with the government that one or two articles by them against a certain preacher will ensure that this preacher is expelled from his mosque or post. Himayah asks what crime Dr. 'Abd-al-Kafi has committed. He says Dr. 'Abd-al-Kafi is persuasive and reasonable. Thousands of youths attend his sermons. He deduces that "success in this bad time has become a crime for which the preachers must be called to account." Himayah asks what is wrong with Dr. 'Abd-al-Kafi's call on actresses and female singers to repent and wear the veil. He asks, "Is this another crime for which he must punished?" Himayah says in this age "virtue has become vice and vice has become virtue."

ARTICLE BY 'ADIL HUSAYN

A 4,000-word article by Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn on pages 5 and 7 deals with several topics, including the television interview with former al-Shawqiyun terrorist 'Adil 'Abd-al-Baqi and the film "The Terrorist." Regarding the television interview with 'Abd-al-Naqi, which was screened several times, including one time with subtitles in English, Husayn casts doubt on 'Abd-al-Baqi's character and maintains that he has ties with the General Intelligence Department and the Interior Ministry. To substantiate this view, the newspaper publishes a picture that was printed in the newspaper AKHBAR AL-HAWADITH on 27 January showing 'Abd-al-Baqi receiving an award from the Interior Minister. Husayn then asks what the "repentant youth" said to deserve all this attention. He says 'Abd-al-Baqi denied that foreign governments had provided the terrorists with money and weapons. 'Abd-al-Baqi says the terrorists obtained money through theft, trade, and collection of donations. Husayn says the al-Shawqiyun are a "marginal" group that is not a serious threat to public security and is not responsible for the escalation of political violence.

Regarding the film "The Terrorist," Husayn said he saw the film and did not find it to be high quality. He asks why the film is surrounded by so much fanfare. He says the film wants to say that: "We are before a vicious, wicked, and murderous Islamic religion. In contrast, we are before a good and beautiful Christian religion. The rest of the Muslims have nothing to do with Islam. Good Muslims are not religious. Any Muslim who becomes religious necessarily becomes a terrorist."

Husayn maintains that "never in its history has Egypt witnessed this level of torture and indiscriminate killing." He claims that there are now 60,000 repeat 60,000 detainees in Egypt, compared to 7,000 detainees during the last days of President al-Sadat.

Husayn says matters have not stopped at fighting extremists and terrorists but have included attacks on al-Azhar and its scholars. He says Al-Azhar, due to several considerations, usually does not intervene in controversial issues unless they threaten the tenets of the religion. Nevertheless, we see that its limited role is not accepted. Husayn says the attacks on Shaykh al-Sha'rawi, the ban on Shaykh al-Ghazali and prominent Islamic thinker Dr. Muhammad 'Amarah from appearing on television, and the expulsion of Dr. 'Abd-al-Kafi from his mosque cannot be within the framework of fighting extremists but is an "all-out war" against righteous religious figures.

Husayn says he has heard about six new prisons being built secretly in the Egyptian desert. He asks for whom these new prisons with high walls and modern equipment are being prepared.

CALL FOR TRIAL OF DR. BUTRUS-GHALI

On page 7 the newspaper carries a 150-word report that says, "the Egyptian Committee in Support of the People of Bosnia-Herzegovina continues to prepare for the popular trial that will be held for the United Nations and its secretary general, Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali, on charges of negligence in the massacres to which the Bosnian Muslims are being subjected." A preparatory committee headed by Yahya al-Rifa'i and including Mahfuz 'Azzam and Hasan Duh as members will collect all papers and documents incriminating the UN secretary general. Dr. 'Izz-al-Din Fudah will act as a prosecutor in the case.

EGYPTIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION

On page 7, the newspaper publishes a 250-word statement by the Egyptian Human Rights Organization asking President Mubarak to intervene to stop the systematic human rights violations inside Egyptian prisons. The statement calls for the formation of an independent committee to hold a comprehensive and neutral investigation on prison conditions. It also calls for the abolition of the Interior Ministry's supervision of the prisons and for their transfer to the supervision of the Ministry of Justice.

U.S. WAR ON EGYPTIAN EXPORTS

On page 7, the newspaper publishes a 250-word report that says the "U.S. Administration has stepped up its war against Egyptian exports, especially textiles." The report adds that the main reasons for this "war on Egyptian exports" are: 1) Egypt has not undertaken a real and tangible effort to include Israel in the Middle East market for cooperation between Israel and the Arab states. 2) The Egyptian Government has rejected several Israeli projects for strengthening cooperation between the two countries. The report says the United States insists on the need for strengthening Egyptian-Israeli economic relations. "These U.S. demands are considered a repetition of the demands of the U.S. trade secretary, who visited Cairo recently and asked Egypt to exert greater efforts to persuade the Arab countries to end their boycott of Israel."

ISLAMISTS WIN AL-MANSURAH UNIVERSITY ELECTIONS

On page 7, the newspaper carries a 200-word report that says the Islamists have won all seats in the elections for the al-Mansurah University Teaching Club. The elected members are Dr. Hasan Mushrif for the College of Agriculture, Dr. Ahmad al-Wasif and Dr. Ahmad Sami for the College of Engineering, Dr. Muhammad al-Dusuqi and Dr. Tahir Hamzah for the College of Sciences, and Dr. Mamduh Mansur for the College of Pharmacology.

Secular Magazine Attacks AL-SHA'B, Others

NC1504120194

[Editorial Report] Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic on 11 April carries several articles attacking the Labor Party's newspaper AL-SHA'B, "extremist books," and a well-known Islamic writer. It presents portraits of two Islamic figures and praises scriptwriters and actors for espousing the battle against terror. Each of the five subjects covered in this editorial report is dealt with under its own heading as follows:

AL-SHA'B CRITICIZED

A 2,000-word article on pages 58-59 by Wahid Hamid attacks the Socialist Labor Party's [SLP] biweekly mouthpiece AL-SHA'B [The People]. In the article, headlined "A Newspaper Against the People," the writer contends that both the paper and the SLP are a single-family enterprise, bringing together a group of relatives and in-laws who share "a hereditary dream of leadership, pursued even if it is a leadership of a ruined homeland."

Hamid claims the paper has no allegiance to the country but instead, "with great ignorance," advocates "the abolition of the Egyptian character" under the claim of establishing an Islamic character. He says the paper, rather than defending the homeland's causes in a sober way, uses exaggeration, invective, sensationalism, and incitement, which does a disservice to any cause it defends. He says the government pays no heed to this publication and might even benefit from it as providing an example of democratic free speech.

The writer accuses AL-SHA'B of belittling the Egyptian Government and people but admiring the systems of government in Sudan and Iraq. Stating that the Iraqi regime would never permit an Islamic government in the country, he says AL-SHA'B's support for this regime must spring from its "automatic sympathy with fascism everywhere, in addition to the usual personal interests well understood by politicians and media people."

Commenting on a recent article by SLP Secretary General 'Adil Husayn in which he calls on the people to support his party's jihad until victory is achieved, the writer asks if the Islamic state that AL-SHA'B and the SLP advocate will be any different from the so-called Islamic governments in Afghanistan and Iran. He remarks that even the Saudi Government is a civilian government that merely permits the Wahhabists [puritanical Muslim sect] to monitor Islamic observances.

The writer concludes by saying: "A religious state is a mere fantasy that is not in harmony with the spirit of Islam, a religion that has preserved people's rights and left them their free will and liberty. We are on the side of Islam. We seek to make it prosper and fight its opponents but without having to live under a failed dictatorship that professes to be Muslim."

EXTREMIST BOOKS

On pages 60-61, 'Abd-al-Sattar al-Tawilah takes issue with "extremist books." In an article entitled "A Document of Shame Against Islam and Muslims," he disputes the arguments set forth in the book "Putting the Apostates on Trial" by Ahmad al-Suyufi and says it approves of the assassination of secular writer Faraj Fudah and others accused of apostasy. He says that al-Suyufi expresses views similar to those of Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali, Shaykh Mahmud Mazru'ah, and Shaykh Qardawi. He objects to the book's premise that a person changing his religion is comparable with national treason and says that even fascist constitutions guarantee freedom of belief.

Al-Tawilah faults the argument that excuses assassinations on the grounds that the government does not permit the religious stream to form a political party or tortures prisoners in jail. He remarks: "Numerous political forces are not permitted to form political parties. Does this mean they have the right to resort to murder and sabotage?"

HUWAYDI VIEWED

An article by Ibrahim 'Isa on pages 61-63 entitled "Fahmi Huwaydi's Pistol Has a Silencer" comments on the writings of the well-known Islamic writer, Huwaydi. He faults him for quoting other Islamic and secular writers out of context to level accusations at them, generally in an indirect manner, without "declaring anything but leaving things to simmer at a suitable temperature so that the bacteria of accusations will survive without being proclaimed but also without dying." He says he believes "Fahmi Huwaydi possesses an exceptional ability and an astonishing, talented, and admirable know-how in clothing truth with falsehood" to arouse the anger of any "fanatic" or any other reader against writers holding views different from his own to the point of making his readers want to "throttle" those writers.

He disputes Huwaydi's description as a "moderate" and says: "The man, talented in several ways, can present himself, and is represented by others, as a moderate. Behind this screen, manipulation occurs. I do not know from where his description as a moderate comes. Is it the calm tone of lamentation in his lines or is it the silencer he uses when he accuses others of disbelief?"

While acknowledging Huwaydi's former "important and great" literary contributions, he accuses him of abandoning his past intellectual achievements by not coming out strongly against the call to kill apostates and for his call to hold a dialogue between the government and the extremists.

ISLAMIC FIGURES HIGHLIGHTED

A 1,800-word report by Usamah Salamah on pages 30-31 discusses the case of a lawyer, Mukhtar Nuh, a formerly obscure but ambitious figure who has been an active member of the Egyptian Lawyers Association as a Muslim Brotherhood representative since 1985. The report discusses his early life since his enrollment as a law student in 1971 and notes that this "skillful guitar player" and member of the drama group at Cairo University's School of Law turned to religion after graduation and was detained by the authorities for 10 months in 1981 in connection with the "religious streams." His first public connection with the Muslim Brotherhood is said to date back to 1985 when he raised the slogan: "Yes, we want it to be Islamic" during the Egyptian Lawyers Association elections. 'Umar al-Talmasani, the late general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, is reported to have told a group of lawyers at that time: "Mukhtar Nuh will become president of the Lawyers Association in 10 years but will become Muslim Brotherhood general guide in just five years."

The report notes that Nuh currently enjoys the backing of Muslim Brotherhood Spokesman Ma'mun al-Hudaybi, who helped nominate him for a seat in the People's Assembly 1987 general election. Nuh is no longer a People's Assembly member but remains active in the Lawyers Association.

A 2,000-word report by 'Abdallah Kamal on pages 32-33 speaks of the experiences of 'Abdallah al-Samawi, occasionally referred to by the writer as Taha al-Samawi, an Islamist jailed several times and who espouses the concept of repudiating society for its disbelief. Al-Samawi describes himself as "only a preacher" but the writer says he is behind the rulings to set video rental shops on fire and links him with the "Repudiation and Renunciation" group.

ARTISTS PRAISED

In a 700-word article on page 34, Ahmad Hamrush expresses dismay at the continuing "terrorist acts by some extremist groups wearing the guise of Islam." He regrets the failure of the political establishment, which he says is plagued by corruption, to do anything about this phenomenon, and praises writers and moviemakers for endeavoring to resist extremism. He notes that Egyptian television has stopped broadcasting some programs and interviewing some personalities that did not properly interpret religion. Instead it is now showing artistic works mentioned elsewhere.

'Frivolous' Treatment of Terrorism Examined

NC1504095094 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic
5 Apr 94 p 9

[Article by Fahmi Huwaydi: "Review of the Season's Testimony"]

[Text] I do not know when we will stop being frivolous in handling an issue as serious and dangerous as terrorism. I maintain, however, that the interview with a repentant extremist which Egyptian television broadcast three times last week raises several serious issues for discussion.

By frivolity I mean the attitude of treating the issue superficially, focussing on some outward features, and summarizing the entire affair with a collection of anecdotes and sensational headlines harping on the same old story—primarily that those groups contain only young guys with sexual and emotional hangups who receive orders and financing from abroad. The media has persistently driven this image home by various means, most recently via television soap operas and motion pictures.

This method is especially bad because it caters to our spontaneous and emotional responses and fosters in us an attitude of disgust. It bypasses our minds and does not require us to think. It makes people angry without understanding why they are angry and therefore convinces them that the individuals concerned are evil, deviant, criminal. People do not understand why those individuals are like that. Were they born that way or were they originally good and later became perverted? The root cause of the problem is ignored and the essential question "why" is not asked, so it follows that no one asks: "What should be done?"

To be precise, in this way of addressing the issue we are preoccupied with the sick person while ignoring the sickness. It is a method of caricaturing terrorists and terrorist behavior. The terrorist dossier itself, however, is left unopened.

The testimony of the repentant leading member—'Adil 'Abd-al-Baqi—is important because it was a direct testimony illustrating the views and experiences of some existing groups. Regardless of possible guidance and the revision of his testimony and no matter the degree of accuracy of his information, we believe that it revealed, in a general way, some important aspects of this disease. It shed some light that deserves to be followed up in order to answer the big question that still needs to be discussed seriously and courageously, namely: Why does such deviant behavior occur? Where does it come from?

Before we attempt to interpret the testimony from this angle, we must pause a moment and examine who the witness and his group are, in order to identify the case study we are addressing. We shall use the man's own statements as evidence.

He was born in 1961, did not complete his secondary education, and joined these groups in 1977 at the age of 16. It was at this point that he was taught to say that this is an infidel society. He was arrested after President al-Sadat's assassination in 1981; and while in jail he became a member of the group known as "al-Shawqiyun," named after "Shawqi al-Shaykh," a dissident belonging to Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman's "Islamic" group. Apparently, however, he quarreled with the al-Shawqiyun and joined another group known as "Hesitation and Confirmation." Throughout his life he has relied on his personal reading to acquire religious knowledge; and at the age of 22 he was regarded as a theoretician, issuing rulings about what is permitted behavior and what is taboo, and leveling accusations of disbelief and apostasy. By chance he came across Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali's book "Jurisprudence in the Life of the Prophet," in which the writer discusses some aspects of the conduct of the Prophet, may God's prayers and peace be with him. He realized then that he and his group were seizing other people's money wrongfully. This was the first spark in his gradual enlightenment as to the errors in the various groups' views and behavior. Other events prompted him to reconsider the whole issue and eventually led him to testify on television, where he renounced the ideology he had embraced for 17 years.

The "Hesitation and Confirmation" group to which he was said to belong is a link in the chain of groups that are covered by the blanket of the heretic ideology which brands [yadmagh] individuals, society, and the authorities as unbelievers. These groups went under various names, notably the "Repudiation and Renunciation," "al-Shawqiyun," "Those Delivered from the Fire," and the "Hesitation and Confirmation" groups. These four groups are the most prominent manifestations of intellectual deviation on the Egyptian Islamic scene. They are small groups of limited influence, drawing their grassroots membership from among simple, unsophisticated people to whom a person like 'Adil 'Abd-al-Baqi can act as an "authority" able to lead them intellectually and organizationally. The heretic ideology is limited to these small groups. An essential difference between them and the larger well-known groups, that is the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic Group, and the Salafis [revanchists] is that the latter, despite having diverse programs, methods, and goals, do not call anyone an unbeliever. This repentant leader took care to explain this difference. His explanation corrected the widespread misconception that branding others as unbelievers is the foundation of Islamic action, a misconception created by frivolous media treatment of the issue. Actually, the heretic ideology is a deviant concept and an exception to the general rule.

If we go back to our subject and examine his remarks carefully, we will find in them important hints concerning the points of weakness and disorder through which this intellectual deviation infiltrates, paving the way for events culminating in terrorism. Here are examples of such factors:

First, he did not find in school anything to satisfy his desire for religious knowledge and thus he left school to seek that knowledge elsewhere. He was asked: Are the school curricula designed to help every person learn true religion? He replied: I felt that the religion of the mosques and what we learn in school did not satisfy my religious needs as a young man.

Both the question and the answer raise an issue which I believe is crucial in tracing the roots of intellectual deviation. This is that our youths emerge from school with a very shallow religious background that fails to give them a minimum of protection for keeping their balance and straight thinking. As a result, young men become soft and pliable putty for anyone to shape.

Regrettably, some of those annoyed by the deviations now apparent in the Islamic stream are calling for countering them by reducing the religious content of the academic curricula on the hypothesis that extremism grows in religious soil so by eliminating that soil we can slow the spread of deviations. These people have used and are still using the slogan "Dry Up the Springs." I remember I criticized this stand in previous articles and said we need to adopt a purposeful policy on religion, not dry up its springs. I warned that the advocates of drying up the springs drive students to various types of extremism and deviation so that they thereby do not fight extremism but encourage and spread it through their poor judgment and shortsightedness.

The example of 'Adil 'Abd-al-Baqi confirms this. The young man did not find what he was looking for at school, so he went looking for it outside school, became involved in illegal acts, and dragged many others with him. I have no doubt that entire generations are suffering from what this person suffered from, and there is no way to save them except by reconsidering the education policy and curricula in a manner that will restore prestige to religious culture and immunize our youths to deviation.

I mentioned before that the years of nationalistic fervor dictated these "nationalistic subjects" at the various education levels right up to university. It was an understandable approach during that stage. In the period of religious resurgence we are now experiencing, we ought to give our youths the healthy food they need at school before they swallow adulterated and poisoned food from street vendors.

Second, when he joined the groups, one of the leading advocates of the proposition that society is heretical convinced him about "legalization"—that is to say that stealing money from others, from "the infidels," and using this money for one's duty is permissible. He was convinced of this and advocated it. He added: "We used to read things, but found no one to advise us on correct concepts. At the same time we shut ourselves in, regarded all preachers as part of the "infidel" regime, and turned our backs on them." At another point he said: "I could not find a clergyman who would tell me if what I read was right or wrong."

This is the first time I have heard the term "legalization." I know that some kind of a shari'ah loophole justifies seizing other people's money on the pretext that they are "infidels." This opens our eyes to the fact that there is an unknown world out there in the dark in which the weirdest ideas are spreading with no one to stem or rectify them.

This draws our attention to more than one crisis:

—the crisis of darkness, in which such groups move;

—the crisis due to preachers who have lost the youths' confidence and forced them to be satisfied with their underworld;

—the crisis of indignation against a society that fostered the mind set among young men that accepts the idea that the society is heretical and that it is permissible to seize people's money and property; and

—the crisis of the higher religious authority, which should be making sure of the correctness of the ideas these youths absorb and taking the lead in seeking a prudent and moderate way.

Suppose this young man, and hundreds or thousands like him, had found a public, legitimate agency to nurture them and satisfy their desire for piety and public service; would the concept of the repudiation of society have spread so easily then? Can anyone imagine that the term "legalization" would have appeared then?

Such questions lead to the discussion of an issue totally ignored amid the preoccupation with extremism and terrorism. It is the need to provide avenues of moderation for these young men before they find themselves compelled to join illegal groups that will indoctrinate them with whatever ideas those groups want, without supervision or accountability.

Another question arises: Why did those young men not find reliable, authoritative ulema to correct the ideas that had taken hold of their minds? The young men regarded preachers as part of the government, a form of authority, and establishment mouthpieces and so they lost faith in them and did not listen to them.

Preacher convoys have toured the country. Reports and photographs of them holding seminars and conferences to fight deviant ideologies fill the newspapers, but when young men were asked about them, they replied: Those preachers did not discuss any issues with us. They came to the villages to dictate things to us.

There is no doubt that those preacher convoys were a bureaucratic solution adopted merely as a stopgap measure and to show that the authorities were doing something. Perhaps we did not need this repentant's testimony to reach the conclusion we are now reaching.

What is the solution? It is necessary to make do better in training and upgrading preachers. Al-Azhar must play its role and do its duty as a beacon of sober thought and an independent institution responsible for the defense of Islam in Egypt and all over the Islamic world. Those who seek to undermine and slander al-Azhar and those who seek to subjugate it and make it part of the political establishment are derogating it and reducing its credibility. Every reduction of its credibility gives free help to deviancy and terrorism. Efforts to undermine or control al-Azhar serve the same ends as extremism.

Commenting on the membership of the deviant groups, the repentant leading member said that most of those who have joined since 1985 were unemployed who "came to us and we provided them with employment in the form of robbery within the context of legalization." He explained that "they wanted to marry and we provided them with the money for that. Within four months such a member would feel he had become somebody, with a job, a home, and a wife."

This description places the socioeconomic factor squarely before our eyes. Unemployed persons find self-fulfillment in the embrace of those groups that provide them with the things society has been unable to give them. If we remember that there are 3 million unemployed people in Egypt, we will immediately realize that those groups have a huge potential army. Unemployment is an important source of members, of those who are looking for a job and self- fulfillment. The issue goes beyond this, for once they are persuaded that their society is heretical and that their mission is to change that society from a swamp of unbelief into an oasis of faith, those young men will find a cause to defend and for which to make sacrifices.

Does not this situation demand some very deep thinking about the younger generation crushed by the ordeals of unemployment, a search for self-fulfillment, and the quest for a dream and a cause?

Should not this situation make us think again of what we are doing for our young people, who actually live on the margins of society where no one cares about them even though one day they will have to lead the country?

Our friend said that his mother gave him 4,000 pounds to start a project and earn a living. She did this after she realized that he had definitely abandoned his studies. He spent the money on forming his "Hesitation and Confirmation" group. He rented a house in which he lived with 25 companions. When the money ran out two months later, the solution was the legalization fatwa. They started stealing bicycles and selling them. When this became insufficient they stole motorcycles, and so on. "The greater the need for money, the more legalization was granted."

This discussion raises the issue of who finances them. Many people find it easy to link financing to foreign sources. Much published comment and various recent movies give the same message. According to this repentant man, generalized statements about links to foreign parties are at the very least not very accurate. He personally spent every penny his mother gave him on a cause he judged to be worth while. Later on, the legalization of theft was the solution to getting the funds necessary for continuing the "mission." What I mean is that this entire scene we are examining was homegrown, including the ideas, the people, and the money. It means that foreign parties were not part of the picture in the beginning. At worst, the role of foreign parties—if such a thing is proved—came later and was incidental.

We are not concerned with exonerating the foreign parties. Our chief concern at this time is to focus attention on the domestic factors in order to give them priority in our effort to eradicate this phenomenon. In other words, repeatedly hammering away about foreign parties does more harm than good because it diverts attention from the original and real domestic causes. These causes lie at our feet and are in our hands but we insist on looking beyond our borders, searching for an unknown foreign party that we cannot see.

What applies to money also applies to weapons. When the man was asked where he had obtained weapons, his simple answer was that weapons are found in every house in Upper Egypt. This means that the weapons have been found inside the country since the beginning. The means of violence were available from the start. What happened afterwards was a development and an exploitation of those means.

In conclusion, one cannot but notice in the statement of the repentant leading member that he wasted 17 years of his life on his miserable adventures and refused to meet his mother when she came to visit him in jail. We cannot fail to notice his references to those who abandoned their families and devoted their lives to a cause they considered righteous. He spoke of the science student who left his studies to peddle socks in the streets and the specialist surgeon who abandoned his profession to sell watches. When one examines these images, one realizes that this army of young men are victims of a corrupt cause and a fallacious dream. This raises the puzzling question: Who is responsible for this waste? Is it merely the responsibility of those who have misled the young men and tempted them with corrupt ideologies about repudiating society and considering the theft of its wealth as legitimate? Or is it also the responsibility of a society that has failed to rally them around an honorable cause and did not fire their imagination with a great dream?

'Adil 'Abd-al-Baqi said that he used to act on the understanding that he had a cause that filled his thoughts and took hold of his feelings and that, in those days, if he had been given 50 death sentences he would not have regretted his acts. That is because he believed he was right and would die a martyr. He is not alone in this; there are many like him. They think they are right and express a willingness to die in defense of their convictions. These are urgent questions: Is there a way to channel these feelings in the right direction, one that can serve the homeland's and the nation's noble objectives? Is there a means to channel this energetic faith, so full of resentment against society, in a way that will help society to progress and realize some of its legitimate dreams?

In the midst of our media's renowned buffoonery, sensationalism, and confusing tactics, it is difficult to answer these questions. Regrettably, sensationalism has governed even the way we read the testimony mentioned here. Many people have focused on the accusations, scandals, and other sensational material that emerged from the testimony. Only a few noticed the moral behind it. Hence, instead of organizing a roundtable to discuss the various aspects of the issue and the responsibility of all parties, we were astounded to see a great pavilion being set up full of shouting, clowning people. They gave us a headache with their loud but empty talk. Those who tried to say something serious could not be heard above the din. This means that the frivolous method of addressing the issue still has the upper hand and that the time for seriousness has not yet come!

Palestinian Affairs

Hamas Reacts to Israeli Threats Against Jordan

JN1604085694 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
16 Apr 94 p 29

[Text] London—Quds Press—Hamas in the occupied territory has rejected threats made by senior Israeli officials against Jordan for allowing Hamas activists to carry out political and media activities within its territory.

In a telephone contact with the Quds Press, an authoritative source in Hamas said that his movement strongly disapproves of the arrogant threats made by Israeli rulers against the brothers in Jordan, adding that Hamas believes that such threats are desperate attempts to drive a wedge in the strong and close relations among the sons of the same people in Jordan and Palestine.

The source said Israelis' failure to arrest those who carry out the attacks forced them to move the confrontation outside the occupied territory, to claim that armed operations are not launched from within the occupied territory, and to make frivolous threats against Arab brothers.

Asked if he believes that his movement will face a secret war by the Israeli Intelligence Department similar to that campaign launched against the PLO two decades ago, the source said: We warn against any hostile acts, including terrorist assassinations, which Israeli officials would carry out—motivated by their bloody background and feelings of frustration and despair—against any of our brothers or against Hamas symbols and spokesmen. The source noted that his movement has preliminary information on an Israeli scheme to kill figures from Hamas. The source, however, did not give further details.

Commenting on the accusations made at the joint news conference held by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres that the military operations are being planned outside the occupied territory, the spokesman [as published] said that the movement carries out no activities of a military nature in any Arab or non-Arab state, adding that the military activities' planning, command, and announcements are made inside the occupied territory.

The source stressed that his movement is concerned about Jordan's security and stability, adding that the movement does not want to give the Israelis any excuse to infringe upon the country's unity and security. The source said: We condemn any Israeli attempt in this regard. The source added that Hamas has no organizational structure outside the occupied territory, noting that the Arab brothers are aware of this fact and understand the movement's great concern about their countries' security and stability.

The source strongly criticized U.S. sympathy with the Israeli threats, saying that this is all aimed at widening the gap and preventing dialogue between the forces of the Palestinian people and official U.S. quarters. The source called on Washington to reassess its political positions and to show more understanding and realization of the nature of the political structure of the Palestinian people. The source warned that certain officials in charge of U.S. foreign policy are attempting to demolish the bases of peaceful relations. He added that this would create further hotbeds of tension and increase anger, resentment, and hostility toward everything related to the U.S. course.

Hamas Threatens Israeli, Jewish Targets Abroad

TA1604143094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1300 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Hamas has disseminated a leaflet in the Gaza Strip threatening that if Israel harms its offices abroad, it will launch a war on Israeli and Jewish targets overseas.

Hamas 'Ready To Reexamine' 'Policy,' Notes Conditions

JN1704094194 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
17 Apr 94 p 25

[Text] Gaza/London—Quds Press and news agencies—The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has lauded the Jordanian-Palestinian cohesion, and stressed that it will maintain this genuine historic cohesion.

In a statement issued by its military wing, known as 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions, and distributed in Gaza City yesterday, Hamas warned the Israeli Government against expanding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict following its claims against the Jordanian position.

In an amazing step, Hamas said that it is ready to reexamine its policy of attacking Israeli military and civilian targets, on the condition that the Israeli prime minister, his army, and government completely stop killing unarmed Palestinians. It pointed out that the objective of the recent 'Afula and Hadera operations, which targeted a group of soldiers and settlers, and in which some civilians were injured, was to deter the Zionist aggression against our people, and legitimate revenge for the martyrs of the abhorrent Hebron massacre. However, in a statement issued by its political bureau yesterday, of which Quds Press received a copy, it said that this is not a constant policy by the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions, but an extraordinary policy imposed by the Israeli enemy government.

The statement added: We, in Hamas, as we have always said, we are not against the principle of peace, but the peace proposed by the enemy government is not peace, but an entrenchment of occupation.

In a clear response to the Israeli criticism of Jordan, it said that the Movement reiterates its concern for the security and stability of all states where the movement's political and economic representatives reside, who operate in accordance with the recognized laws in these states. The movement is also concerned not to give the enemy any justification to exert pressure on any of these states.

The statement said that any peace in the region must be based on Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories, the removal of settlements, and the holding of free elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to elect our people's representatives and leadership. It added that the elected leadership is the one that will decide all the consequent steps and future of the cause.

In a statement distributed in Gaza, Hamas stressed that its units "had abided by carrying out its operations within the known borders of Palestine. Our leadership was committed to planning and carrying out its operations only inside the occupied Palestinian territories."

The statement added: "If the Israeli Government seeks to expand the arena of the conflict and decides to move against the Hamas Movement's officials or offices abroad, then it will consider this as the beginning of a war in which Israeli blood, interests, and gatherings of Jewish communities all over the globe will be legitimate [targets], and we will reply more harshly to any act of aggression."

The statement emphasized: The "Israeli Government knows better than anyone that the Islamic Resistance Movement has long and strong arms in all the world states. We have thus far abided by the rules of the game in the conflict arena. However, If the Israeli Government violates the rules of the game, then this government and the Jewish people will be first to pay the price."

The Hamas Movement called on its loyalists to declare a state of "mobilization and the highest degree of alertness."

Hamas' Ghawshah on Reciprocal Treatment With Israel

JN1704115994 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 Apr 94 pp 1, 4

[By 'Ali Nun]

[Text] London—Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, told AL-HAYAH yesterday that "the principle of reciprocal treatment is approved by all secular and religious laws. When Israeli Prime Minister Rabin stops killing our children and women, Hamas will then stop attacking Israeli civilians and commit itself to attacking soldiers and settlers only."

Replying to a question, he asserted that "the intifadah youths will perform miracles and prove that the Israeli Army is a paper tiger." Ghawshah rejected President Yasir 'Arafat's declared regret over the killing of Israeli civilians, and reiterated that "the ball is in Rabin's court. The blood of Palestinian children and women is not cheaper than the blood of Israeli civilians."

In a telephone contact, Ghawshah told AL-HAYAH that the Hadera operation, for which the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions claimed credit, "came as part of the Palestinian people's reaction to the holy al-Ibrahimi Mosque's massacre. Moreover, it was directed against Israeli occupation and is part of the Hamas Movement strategy. We believe that there cannot be any peace as long as there are settlers on our land. No doubt, these strikes have put Rabin, 'Arafat, and U.S. President Bill Clinton in an impasse because they are in the same boat."

Ghawshah added: "These strikes prove that Rabin failed to fulfill his promise to the Jews that he would restore calm and guarantee security. These strikes happened in the territories occupied in 1948 under strict and serious security measures. Rabin's situation is being eroded. As for 'Arafat, the Palestinian people have bypassed him since the Ibrahimi Mosque's massacre in Hebron. When the 'Afula operation was carried out, Hamas managed to prove to the world that it can punish the criminals and murderers and impose respect for the will of Muslims and Arabs throughout the world."

Replying to a question, Ghawshah said that "Hamas was committed to attacking soldiers and settlers. What happened, however, is that Rabin did not stop killing children and women. Yesterday, they killed a pregnant woman, and they did not stop blowing up houses, which reminds us of the Nazi actions in Europe. Therefore, Hamas was obliged to expand the circle. The principle of reciprocal treatment is approved by all secular and religious laws. As we eagerly adhere to Islamic principles, we are aware that Islam permits reciprocal treatment for us. Thus, let them stop killing children and women, and Hamas will then commit itself to attacking only soldiers and settlers. If, however, they continue their actions, we tell them that the blood of Palestinian civilians is not cheaper than the blood of Jewish civilians. Rabin should be aware of this."

Hamas, Fatah Heads in Gaza Discuss Cooperation

'Several Agreements' Reached

TA1704050094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Hamas will cooperate with the autonomy police on the condition that terror attacks inside the Green Line continue. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that in the negotiations between the heads of Fatah and Hamas in Gaza, several agreements have been reached. These include an agreement of nonbelligerency between the two organizations, and cooperation for the removal of the Zionist enemy off the land of Palestine. A Fatah official in the Gaza Strip has said that Hamas also demands that Fatah ask Israel for compensation for the years of occupation.

Fatah Official: 'No Cooperation on Terror'

TA1704093294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0705 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Telephone interview with Sufyan Abu-Zayidah, "prominent Fatah leader in the Gaza Strip," by Shalom Oren, place not given; from the "It Is All Talk" program—live]

[Text] [Oren] We heard this morning that Hamas considers cooperation with the autonomy police conditional on continued terror attacks inside the Green Line boundaries. What did you reply?

[Abu-Zayidah] I believe there was nothing new in this morning's report by Moti Amir. That is, no new situation was created today which did not exist a week, a month, or a year ago.

[Oren] The recent attacks inside Israel, however, do create a new situation.

[Abu-Zayidah] I am speaking about our negotiations with Hamas, not about the location of terror attacks. We hold constant discussions in a bid to preserve the peace process, as Palestinians, as PLO members.

[Oren] What do you tell them when the say: We will cooperate only if we are allowed to go on with terror attacks in return?

[Abu-Zayidah] Obviously, there are serious differences between us and Hamas regarding the road we should take. We have covered quite a distance on the road to peace, the peace process. They do not believe in this way, and it is no secret; everybody knows this. There is no argument in which they say: You cooperate with us on terror, and we will cooperate in the negotiations. This is self evident. They have their way and we have ours.

[Oren] How, then, do the two organizations—one of which wants peace and the other does not—negotiate?

[Abu-Zayidah] There are many things we discuss. For example, both parties are not interested in a head-on collision between the two on the ground. Naturally, we both seek to prevent a civil war in the strip. We share an interest on this issue. Another example concerns the future of the process: Soon there will be a Palestinian rule here—this is a fact! Knowing this, they know they will have to go along with the new situation, and discuss their incorporation in it.

[Oren] When autonomy is set up and there is a Palestinian police in the Gaza Strip, what will you do if, God forbid, terror acts are perpetrated inside the Green Line?

[Abu-Zayidah] As Palestinian members of the PLO, we will do whatever is required. We will implement and observe every agreement we sign.

[Oren] Will you arrest Hamas members when required?

[Abu-Zayidah] We will have our laws and it is clear that Hamas and PLO members will be arrested if they violate them. Anyone who violates the law will put himself in jeopardy. This is the way it is being done in every organized state, although we do not have a state yet. We will have our rule, which is clear, and it will have its own laws, and the citizens will have to observe the laws.

[Oren] But there is cooperation between Fatah and Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

[Abu-Zayidah] On what, for example?

[Oren] For example, speaking on the anniversary of the death of Abu-Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], Muhsayn Abu-al-Ata, a Hamas leader, spoke about such cooperation.

[Abu-Zayidah] Look, there are no taxes on words, as you say. Let me tell you—there is no cooperation on terror. We know that the terror attacks aim at damaging the peace process. How can we cooperate with this? We will, for example, cooperate on education.

[Oren] Do you have any bargaining chips with Hamas? We know that Hamas receives aid from Jordan while Fatah has financial problems. Hamas has arms, while Fatah handed over some of its weapons to the Army.

[Abu-Zayidah] You bet we have. We will be in charge. We will have a police force, money that we have, and money we are yet to receive. The rules of the games will change.

[Oren] What is your reaction to the report that Hamas is making cooperation with the autonomy police conditional on the continuation of attacks inside the Green Line? Do you absolutely reject this?

[Abu-Zayidah] We are not only rejecting this, we do not allow them to even say this. This request means sabotaging the peace process. Do you believe we will commit suicide? It is impossible. Anyone who thinks this way is insane. Believe me, they have never raised this condition.

[Oren] Do you deny that they did?

[Abu-Zayidah] They did not raise this. They cannot raise this. They know our policy.

Hamas Denies Accord Signed With Fatah

TA1804124294 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 18 Apr 94 p 1

[Text] Gaza—Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, yesterday denied having any knowledge of news agency reports that an agreement had been signed between Fatah and Hamas in the Gaza Strip. He accused Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin of raising such allegations in a bid to promote dubious aims.

Al-Zahhar said that relations between Fatah and Hamas were normal and that the meetings between the two sides are merely aimed at resolving some outstanding problems.

Regarding the arrival of the international observer forces to Hebron, al-Zahhar said: I still believe that this is an international trick to draw the Palestinians to the negotiating table. This will not change anything on the ground.

Opposition Said Experiencing 'Euphoria' After Attacks

JN1804123694 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 15 Apr 94 p 5

[Text] Independent and party members of the opposition to the Oslo accord are experiencing a state of euphoria and a sense of victory over the accord and its supporters and their conviction that the Palestinians have lost all their weapons.

Informed sources believe the military escalation by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad has increased the popularity of Palestinian opposition to the Oslo accord in general. The sources told AL-HAYAH the increase in the popularity of any faction is not in the interest of the Alliance of Palestinian Forces (the 10 factions) as an alliance. Rather, it is in the interest of some factions, especially the factions that took practical steps and did not confine their opposition to slogans and rhetoric.

The sources point out that the 'Afula, Ashdod, and Hadera operations carried out by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, which are part of the alliance, have revitalized the two factions only and not the entire alliance. The alliance as a whole has so far failed to come up with any concrete plans. In fact, ideological differences relating to views and objectives have been apparent in practice and bolstered each faction's separate view of the Palestine question and its endeavor to achieve its factional objectives.

At any rate, the sources continue, the recent military actions have somewhat enhanced the image of the opposition and improved its situation, having reached a different stage in the recent months when Palestinian negotiators were conducting negotiations in Cairo about the stages of the administrative self-rule and making steps in this direction, regardless of the nature of these steps and agreement or disagreement with them.

The sources say the autonomy negotiations on the one hand and the opposition's inaction on the other have given rise to a third current in the recent four months that followed the signing of the Oslo accord. This third current rejects both attitudes.

Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi, secretary general of the Islamic Jihad Movement, told AL-HAYAH "those who were misled and thought we could do nothing are mistaken. We can strike hard. This is our practical choice in the current stage. When the movement carried out the Ashdod operation, the people regained confidence in us and in our ability to stage confrontation. We proved that we are not helpless. Therefore, the battle with the occupation will continue."

He added that after six months of the Oslo accord, the Palestinian man in the street has become bored of rhetoric that does not do anything. However, the situation is now different.

Editorial: Hamas Operation Deemed Justified

PM1504110594 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 14 Apr 94 p 11

[Editorial: "Legitimate Fedayeen Operation"]

[Text] Fedayeen operations in the occupied Arab territories are escalating to avenge the killing of the martyrs of the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre in Hebron. A week after the 'Afula suicide operation, as a result of which seven Israelis were killed and 50 others wounded, a Palestinian fedayee belong to Hamas carried out another suicide operation in Hadera, north of Hebron. As a result, six Israelis were killed and 30 others wounded, some seriously.

The recent operation came while Israel was celebrating the anniversary of its establishment at the expense of the Palestinian people and their territory. It also coincided with the date set for the completion of the Israeli forces' withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area in accordance with the Oslo agreement stipulations.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is responsible for every drop of Palestinian or Israeli blood. Because the policies he has pursued, whether in running the negotiation process or in suppressing the intifadah inside the occupied territories, have encouraged extremism and subsequent violent operations, especially from the Israeli side.

At the negotiating table Rabin used the method of procrastination and evasion, thus voiding the peace process of any substance and putting the PLO in a very embarrassing situation. With regard to repression, more than 160 Palestinians have been martyred by Israeli troops' bullets since the signing of the Oslo agreement.

However, Rabin could have rescued the bilateral negotiations from their impasse when he assumed power, just before the eighth round. But he did not. He wanted them to revolve in the same vicious circle and with the same negotiating team for a further four rounds.

When the PLO opened the secret Oslo channel and reached an agreement stipulating withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, the mentality of a fanatic Zionist general dominated that of a politician. And Rabin did his utmost as a former general to prevent the implementation of the agreement through impossible demands and by drowning the Taba and Cairo negotiations in minor details that inspire no assurance or trust.

Any fedayeen operation in the occupied territories can only be seen in the framework of the Palestinian Arab people's right to resist in order to get rid of the occupation. It is a legitimate right which all the other peoples have exercised, including the French people during the Nazi occupation and the U.S. people during their revolution against the British occupation under the leadership of George Washington. As long as the Israeli occupation continues, and as long as the Rabin government continues to encourage settlement building the occupied territories and to use rocket launchers to shell the homes of intifadah activists, the resistance and fedayeen operations will continue, regardless of the human and economic losses suffered by the people of the occupied territories.

The Palestinians—moderates or extremists—have had enough as a result of the Israeli repressive policies seeking both the land and conducting a constant starvation process for them. The moderates have been frustrated since the Rabin government's refusal to comply with the first date for its forces' withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho on 13 September. And the extremists had no option but to step up the fedayeen operations in retaliation to the settlers' provocations, which did not begin with the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre and will not end with the murder of a woman, three months pregnant, in Ramallah the days before yesterday evening.

The United States, sponsor of the peace process, shoulders a major part of the responsibility for the deterioration of conditions to this point. Because it has always preferred to overlook the Israeli murder operations against the Palestinians, refusing to provide international protection for the people of the occupied territories when the issue was referred to the United Nations and its Security Council.

The only solution to get out of this cycle of violence lies in ending the occupation and removing the settlements. As for trying to deal with conditions in the occupied territories as a security issue, not as an issue of a people deprived of their legitimate right to self-determination, it will lead to nothing except the escalation of resistance inside Palestine and further instability in the region.

'Arafat Interview on Rabin, Gaza, Jericho Reported

TA1504112694

[Editorial Report] Tel Aviv SHISHI in Hebrew on 15 April in page 4 carries a 1,000-word report on an interview with PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat by 'Uzi Mahanaymi conducted on 11 April at PLO headquarters in Tunis.

Referring to Rabin, 'Arafat says: "I am pragmatic. I see things as they are. The man does not want to give me Gaza and Jericho." Moreover, he says, "Rabin regrets the whole business. Believe me."

Mahanaymi asks him why should he not accept what Rabin promised, Gaza and Jericho, and then worry about the details.

Shaking his head, 'Arafat replies: "Rabin does not want to give me Gaza and Jericho. I am sure about it."

Asked whether he can afford not to accept Gaza and Jericho or complete what he started in Washington, the PLO leader replies: "I can wait. I have waited so many years, I can wait another 10 years. Just you wait and see what happens when I come out and tell the world that the process failed and why it did. You will see the reaction then. I have patience. I can wait." Moreover, 'Arafat notes, "I could have done business with Begin. I could have done business with Dayan. You know what—even with Shamir I could."

Asked why he should not meet Rabin to break the stalemate, 'Arafat replies: "There is no point to it. A meeting will not bring about a breakthrough."

When Mahanaymi remarks that Rabin could divert his efforts to talks with Syria, whereas he had crossed the point of no return, 'Arafat answers: "I have patience. I am patient, I have all the time in the world." He goes on to say: "It takes two to tango, right? The same goes for peace. They do not want to. So, what can I do?"

Commenting on the way Israel conducts the negotiations, he says: "They came to me in Cairo with their walkie-talkies. Everybody has his own personal walkie-talkie. They call Israel. They step out to the garden and speak. One reports to Baraq, another reports to Peres, and the third reports to Rabin. Is that the way to work? I swear to you, President Mubarak was kept waiting four hours until they finished all their talking.

"I will not forget what happened with Peres. We came to talk business, and all of a sudden he gets on the walkie-talkie with Rabin. I saw his hair stand on end and his mood change.

"And then there was the business of adjourning the talks because of Holocaust Remembrance Day. What was this all about? If Remembrance Day was the reason, then how do you explain that the economic talks in Paris continued? Not only did they hold talks on Remembrance Day, but also on the Sabbath. So, what is going on here? The economic talks are more important than the political talks. And, if they were really adjourned because of Remembrance Day, why did the Paris talks continue that day?"

Asked where the Americans come into the picture, 'Arafat "does not reply, and makes a dismissive gesture with his hand."

Wrapping up the interview, Mahanaymi asks 'Arafat the same question he has asked him for years: "Can a Western and European-oriented Israel, unwilling to assimilate into its environment, survive in the Middle East?" The PLO leader reported "smiled, but was not prepared to answer this question either."

'Abbas Discusses Differences in Cairo Talks

NC1804085394 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Telephone interview with Mahmud 'Abbas, member of the PLO Executive Committee, in Tunis, by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz, in Cairo, date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—live or recorded]

[Text] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] Welcome to our program.

['Abbas] Thank you.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] A new round of Palestinian-Israeli talks has started in Cairo over the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement. The Economic Affairs Committee also resumed its work in Paris. What have these talks achieved?

['Abbas] Significant progress has been achieved in the latest round of talks in Cairo. The two sides worked out full details concerning the police force. This topic is now closed. Once the signal is given, the police force will be ready to deploy. The issue has been fully discussed.

The talks in Cairo also focused on the civilian [local administration] functions. Only one of these functions needs further discussion. The current round of talks may finalize this issue as well.

Economic issues are being discussed in Paris. Economic issues, we all know, are numerous and complicated. At issue are concerns such as customs, taxes, trade, merchandise, labor, and currency. I can say there has been some 90-percent progress in this regard. I expect that issues concerning both the economy and the civilian administration will be resolved in the current round of talks.

If some issues remain unsettled, the two sides will decide whether to hold further negotiations to resolve them or begin implementing the agreement immediately It all depends on what the two sides will agree upon.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] What are the most important of the unresolved issues?

['Abbas] They have to do with security, the crossings, geographic jurisdiction, and the judiciary. There are quite a few snags here and there and although we cannot shrug them off, I think it is advisable to begin the implementation and let the talks go on. This is what we plan to tell the Israelis.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] What is the real cause of the remaining differences between the Palestinians and Israelis?

['Abbas] It has to do with the interpretation of the Declaration of Principles. Every side is trying to interpret it in the way that suits them, to tell you the truth. The Declaration of Principles is a document that needs interpretation and clarification and gives rise to differing views and a bit of horse-trading. This is the reason for the differences. Naturally, the Israelis want to hold on to the land and the authority they have until the very last. They find it hard to let go.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] The recent incidents in the occupied territories have proven that Israel's security claims are unreal and that there is a need for Palestinian security as well.

['Abbas] I hope the Israelis will understand this, namely, that both the Israelis and Palestinians need security. I hope the Israelis will also understand that the issue is actually one of confidence, not security. We are discussing peace. If we have genuine intentions of making peace, real security and other measures will certainly be taken without reference to texts.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Recent Israeli statements say the Palestinian-Israeli Agreement will be signed soon. Is this true?

['Abbas] I cannot give dates or depend on dates. I say that when work on the basic and necessary files is completed, the two sides will be ready for signing and implementation. There is another point: The two sides may finish with some files and agree to begin implementation while negotiations on the remaining files continue. This is decided through negotiations. But we cannot say the signing will be tomorrow, the day after, next week, or in two weeks. A single word or minor problem may obstruct the signing. We cannot give people false hopes that may not be fulfilled.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Should we expect a summit meeting between Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin very soon?

['Abbas] When a summit is decided, it will mean the implementation of the agreement has started. Such a summit will be meant to announce the implementation, not to hold negotiations.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Mahmud 'Abbas: The file of the Palestinian police force was closed after an agreement was reached. Is the force prepared to assume security on the Palestinian territory?

['Abbas] Yes. Of course. The force will be ready. It is. When it enters Palestinian territory, it will start assuming its national responsibilities on its land.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] This is my last question. The multilateral talks on water are now being held in Muscat, Oman. A Palestinian delegation is participating. What are the Palestinian proposals at these talks?

['Abbas] We make no Palestinian proposals. We make Arab ones. We cooperate with the Arab brothers taking part in these negotiations. The water issue is of concern not only to the Palestinians, but to all Arab sides in the Middle East. Any views we may offer, therefore, must be in harmony with the views of our brothers who are attending the talks or are concerned with this issue.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Thank you.

['Abbas] You are welcome.

Quray' Offers Views on Paris, Cairo Talks

JN1704202394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1430 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Telephone interview with Ahmad Quray', head of the PLO Economic Department, by unidentified reporter, in the studio, place and date not given; from the "With the Events" program—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Good evening.

[Quray'] Good evening to you.

[Reporter] How true is the report that an economic agreement between Israel and the PLO is likely next week?

[Quray'] I think both sides want to see these negotiations wrapped up, after the two sides have probed each other's position. I hope the next round of talks will see us reach an agreement. There still are some fundamental issues pending...

[Reporter, interrupting] In which areas?

[Quray'] The question of imports is presenting difficulties. For the Palestinian side this is of vital importance, since it has an Arab dimension and affects Palestinian relations with the Arab states. The imports issue also bears on the difficult circumstances under which the Palestinians are living and coming up against in Israeli rules and regulations. There are other issues like the monetary system and what currencies will be legal tender. Insurance and tourism also have yet to be addressed.

[Reporter] Will the current water-sharing talks in Muscat have a positive impact on economic talks that will open in Paris tomorrow?

[Quray'] The two sets of talks are unconnected. The Muscat talks are mulitlateral, the Paris talks are bilateral, addressing economic concerns.

[Reporter] But cooperation on the wider front of the Middle East may help along the bilateral ties between Israel and the PLO.

[Quray'] We have an agreement that we are working to put in place. Regarding Israel's relations with the Arab world, this issue remains tied to a wider durable and comprehensive peace with all the Arab parties and to Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories in the Golan Heights, Jordan, and the West Bank and Gaza. When this kind of peace comes, the climate will recommend itself to rearranging the regional landscape so as to ensure security, stability, and prosperity for this region that has long suffered from wars.

[Reporter] You are in touch with Palestinian negotiators in Cairo. Does it look that these talks will be completed soon?

[Quray'] I hope that agreement will be reached soon there, now that the issues have been defined. There are not many controversial issues left. Most of the issues have more or less been settled. With questions of the Palestinian police and security now virtually settled, I think it will be possible to sort out the issues that remain if Israel is willing.

[Reporter] As long as there is a Palestinian willingness to reach agreement, I think there is a possibility.

[Quray'] We have the will to reach an agreement and get to the territories. An agreement cannot be viable and credible before the withdrawal begins and the Palestinian delegation arrives in the land.

[Reporter] When we were in Washington, you promised that you would be here in the country no later than February. Is there a set date for the PLO leadership to arrive in Gaza and Jericho?

[Quray'] If the Cairo talks and the economic agreement are completed, I think it will be a matter of days before the Palestinians enter Gaza and Jericho. We hope this will be in early May. I am not setting a fixed date. However, further postponement will help neither the agreement nor the peace process.

[Reporter] Mr. Ahmad Quray', head of the PLO's Economic Department, thank you.

[Quray'] Thank you.

Collaborators Receive Israeli Identity Cards

TA1804072794 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 14 Apr 94 p 3

[Excerpt] In recent weeks, scores of collaborators with Israel have received blue Israeli identity cards. This came after the PLO, in its negotiations with Israel, refused to issue a general amnesty for collaborators.

This identity card permits collaborators and their families to live wherever they wish in Israel. A large number of collaborators have expressed their intention to reside in Arab villages within the Green Line. [passage omitted]

Article Reviews PLO Leadership in Gaza

TA1504181794 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 8 Apr 94 pp 6, 7, 33

[Article by Tzvi Gilat: "'There Will Be No Civil War in the Gaza Strip'"]

[Text] Spirits in the Gaza Strip were markedly low last Wednesday [6 April] compared with the week of euphoria experienced at the sight of the accelerated IDF [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal from the Strip. The Islamic Jihad called for the monthly general strike as it does on the 6th of every month, reminding the locals that the intifadah is, in fact, not over. The streets were covered with rocks and the remains of burned tires.

The Palestinians failed to show up for the ceremony the IDF had prepared at the entrance to the al-Shati' refugee camp to hand over the police building. The disappointed Israeli policemen quickly folded up the refreshment tables. The disappointed residents started to slowly move away as IDF soldiers began pushing them with increasing determination, having no choice as the friction became intolerable.

Dozens of local residents crowded the gates of the Bayt Lahiya Civil Administration offices, seeking exit permits to Israel, while giant cranes lifted the barracks one by one. It looked as if all that will be left there soon will be the long line of unsolved problems.

In the afternoon, when the reports on the 'Afula car bomb started coming in, my taxi driver's face turned gray. He recalled the preintifadah days "when we used to work at a steak house in Rishon Leziyyon from morning till night and go home to the Strip once a week. It was quiet and good." From his point of view, a life of exploitation and humiliation is better that the current situation. "Now they will expand the closure," he said with concern. "You will leave, and we will remain here between the fences. What will we have? All the space between Gaza and Rafah. You can drive through our entire autonomy and the car engine will not even warm up."

Twilight is the hour of great hopes and of fears. At the PLO headquarters in the Rimal neighborhood, the deportees who returned the day before through the Rafah crossing repeatedly hug their friends at the local command. There is hope in their eyes. They are certain the road is leading to the establishment of a state.

Most of the deportees maintained daily contacts with the Gaza Strip. While in Tunis, Rashid Abu-Shibak, founder of the Fatah Hawks, was a member of the Gaza committee which liaised between Chairman 'Arafat and his comrades in the field. Upon arrival, he was appointed chairman of the liaison committee with the IDF. As soon as he arrived at the border crossing, he held a business meeting with Brigadier General Doron Almog, commander of the IDF forces in the Gaza Strip and his Israeli counterpart. A business meeting between two practical men. As a rule, the higher you go in the level of command, the more people speak to the point and not in slogans.

Midhat al-Salim, who had been serving a life sentence, was released in the Jibril deal, arrested time and again, and deported in early 1991. He returned yesterday and already wants to start working. He would rather not talk about the past and would not discuss the reason he was given a life sentence. All he would say is that he used to be a member of one the top secret squads operating in the Gaza Strip in the 1980's, named after Rafiq Salama, who, according to him, was killed on 25 December 1990. He pronounces the date in the way a soldier would state his serial number.

"It is unhealthy to discuss the past," al-Salim says. "We do not wish to intimidate the Israelis. In the past, I acted like a soldier fighting for peace, and I am going to fight for peace now as well." What will he do now? Al-Salim does not yet have an official assignment but says that the bulk of his work will be against "our extremists." A local Shin Bet? He prefers not to use this word. "We will reach an understanding with them," he assures me. "They will know their limitations." It is to be assumed that he means Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement].

Al-Salim has no difficulties assimilating back into the Gaza Strip after being away for three years. Sufyan Abu-Zayidah, a local Fatah leader, was a member of the same terror squad with him.

Abu-Zayidah, an eloquent person, carefully puts forth his ideas in Hebrew. Alert to language nuances, he tries to introduce to the Israeli media the idea of peace and coexistence. In an interview he granted Karmela Menashe of Qol Yisra'el, he asked that she say at the end "the PLO offices, Gaza," and not "the PLO offices in Gaza."

His office and the office of the Arab affairs adviser at the Civil Administration maintain frequent fax communication. When asked, Abu-Zayidah says that in the autonomy, he will be the Jewish affairs adviser.

Abu-Zayidah shares an office at the central PLO building with Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq. There is no clear distribution of authorities between them; everything is being done in cooperation, but Abu- Zayidah focuses more on coordination with the IDF, while 'Abd-al-Raziq is primarily engaged in coordinating with the other Palestinian organizations in the Strip, including Hamas.

He is an impressive man, age 39 but looks older. He was released from prison only four months ago, shortly before completing a 20-year prison term, in response to a special request from Yasir 'Arafat. He was appointed a member of the Fatah leadership while in the Nafha prison. There, together with jailed Hamas leaders, he signed a document regulating coordinated operations in the Gaza Strip by the two organizations. As is well known, the Gaza Strip is being run from the city and from prisons.

'Abd-al-Raziq was a student in Lebanon when he joined Fatah. After he returned from his studies, he prepared an explosive charge and took it to Rishon Leziyyon to retaliate for the killing of three Palestinian leaders in the al-Firdan operation (he, too, utters the exact date this happened as if it were the date he joined the army). The charge exploded in his hands, he stresses; there were no Israeli casualties. He still carries the scars of that day: numerous scars, a split lip sewn together by undergoing plastic surgery several times, a twisted hand. He has nothing but praise for the medical treatment he received at Asaf Harofe Hospital.

In prison, he expanded his studies. He studied the history of the Haganah and read the writings of Ben-Gurion, Rabin, Dayan, and Begin—all in Hebrew. He says that the books influenced and encouraged him. "I was impressed by the determination of those men, by their ability to reach their goals despite the difficulties. It helped me through the darkest days." To get to know Jewish history even better, he took an Open University course called "From Jerusalem to Yavne." He is better versed in the history of Yohanan Ben-Zakay and the Roman rule than most Israelis.

You must have compared this with your situation, I suggested. You must have viewed the Palestinians as the Jews with the Israeli occupation forces acting the part of the Romans.

"There is no comparison," Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq says. "The Romans were much worse. They tried to wipe out an entire culture."

'Abd-al-Raziq is also very careful with his choice of words. When I ask him to confirm that he was one of the leaders of the "revolt of the security prisoners" staged in Israeli prisons, he asks that I replace the word "revolt" with "struggle for rights." What is the purpose of making such fine distinctions? "It is important to be precise. We care very much about how the Israeli public opinion reads us."

Why do you care so much about the Israeli public? Israel will soon be out of here. Why not deal with your own public? I asked.

"The Israeli public opinion is very important. Israel is a democratic society. Public opinion will determine what will take place here. It is important that you realize that we are not extremists. We are sensible people who know what their goals are. Naturally, our goal is an independent state, but it is important to point out that this state will seek peace with Israel. Without it, we stand no chance to exist. We need peace for domestic and external reasons.

"Unfortunately, Palestinian public opinion is less important at this time. We are not yet a democratic society. Our people are motivated by emotions. Sometimes I have to speak to the people's sentiments to promote our strategic goals. We have no other option but to become a democratic society. Anyone who fails to understand that understands nothing."

His remarks imply that he attributes the failure to understand to the chief leaders in Tunis. 'Abd-al-Raziq is not worried. They will understand. They have no choice. 'Arafat, too, will understand. "So far, our organization itself has been undemocratic," he admits. "The regime is undemocratic. In fact, there is hardly any regime to speak of."

Conversations with former prisoners, who constitute the local Gaza leadership, are in some peculiar way easy and relaxed. I am certain that IDF officers come across this daily. These are people who lost their youth in prison, who were subjected to the most rugged interrogations, who proved their character and determination in the toughest tests possible. Lies do not interest them, and the feeling that nothing could scare them any more helps them to speak openly with both Major General Matan Vilna'i and Yasir 'Arafat.

'Abd-al-Raziq says with indifference that he is not concerned about his future station or standing. 'Arafat may decide whatever he likes; he does not depend on his decision. "I have never been a man searching for a position. My position found me." He estimates that whoever comes to rule Gaza will require his qualifications—his personality, ideological fortitude, organizational skills, integrity, his excellent Hebrew, and his understanding of the Israeli system and Israeli soul. Invaluable assets.

The seminar "From Jerusalem to Yavne" taught him how dangerous religious fanaticism is. He has a dream: to establish a universal movement opposing religious fanaticism. And he is the man who oversees the daily coordination with Hamas.

"It is true," he says, "that we maintain an open communication channel. I assure you: Hamas knows its place perfectly well, and it knows that it should avoid starting a civil w
F will return to Gaza. I can allay your fears: Even if it happens—and you know to what organization I belong and how much I want my organization to do well—even if Hamas comes to power, it will happen democratically, while safeguarding democratic values, because without democracy, we will all go down here."

Authoritative Israeli sources also believe that Hamas will not hinder the PLO and that it will play by the rules in the hope of enlisting the support of the majority of the public, the majority that does not identify with any side.

The prevailing opinion is that Hamas must not cause a "fitnah." Fitnah, or civil strife, is a major taboo according to the Koran. The practical implication of this Koran law is that Hamas will have to avoid attacking inside the Palestinian-controlled territory. As the PLO is in charge of the Qatif Bloc settlers' security, a Hamas attack on the Qatif settlers will force the PLO to shoot at Hamas members, possibly pitching the entire system into a domestic war. The Hamas leadership will seek to prevent such a development, IDF elements estimate, for practical as well as ideological reasons. "There must be no private militias, either on our or the other side," Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq says.

Which means, I told him, that the Qatif Bloc settlers will be safer than Israelis anywhere.

"That is very possible," 'Abd-al-Raziq says seriously, "and it naturally depends on them as well. We obviously do not want them here; they should start preparing for a possible departure. But it is equally obvious that we must succeed in carrying out the task we have undertaken. If the Gaza First experiment fails, we will never reach a permanent arrangement and independence. And we want independence."

Hisham 'Abd-al-Raziq and his colleagues understand the reality. In Tunis, it is less understood. Nabil Sha'th placed a mine on the negotiating table by demanding last Wednesday that an armed and uniformed police force enter Gaza amid festive processions. The IDF was opposed, as was the local leadership. The locals understand very well that the deployment of an armed Palestinian police force before it has been granted formal powers will raise unattainable expectations. The locals prefer the policemen to enter quietly, to remain inside their camps, and to train until the right moment when are they able to take up their posts.

Right now, there is talk of about 3,000 Palestine Liberation Army [PLA] members. Thousands of locals enrolled at the recruitment offices, but they have had no training as yet. They will be unable to take up their posts for another two months. Actually, 'Arafat's appointments, against which no one dares to speak out, are more than surprising. The PLA generals have had no operational experience, and their knowledge of the terrain is minimal. Even 'Arafat's local appointment is odd: He appointed Zakariyah al-Agha, an engineer, as head of Fatah in the Strip. It is a worthy position, but in practice, it entails very few powers. Al-Agha is preoccupied primarily with settling feuds and conversing with journalists.

The PLO's offices in the Strip are situated in his private residence in the Rimal neighborhood. Not to worry, al-Agha owns another villa for his own use. He rarely makes an appearance at the offices. He has nothing to look for among the determined young people who populate the building. When the local leaders waited for the returning deportees at the Rafah terminal, the young people banded together, laughing and carrying on like a bunch of reserve soldiers meeting after an operation. A detached al-Agha remained standing alone by the door. He does not belong to this generation; neither does 'Arafat. It is to be hoped that he is sufficiently astute to give this generation the role which it—and only it—can play in the process.

Israel is concerned about the security issue. The issue is more or less closed. Yet civilian issues have hardly been discussed at all, and they are a true time bomb. Israel did not really invest in Gaza during its rule. A considerable part of the taxes levied from the residents of the territories was used to pay the Civil Administration personnel's salaries. The Israeli command officers—soon they will become mere coordination officials—had the rank of deputy directors and the salaries to go with it. They are leaving the Strip. For a while, they will work from the coordination offices in the Erez checkpoint. The services will be left to the locals. Some of the local administration officials have been mistakenly labeled collaborators. It is to be hoped that 'Arafat will allow them to keep their jobs and that he will not appoint his own people, who have no idea how the system operates. "We will miss the administration yet," a local resident, whose name is being withheld for obvious reasons, told me. "In our system, everything is corrupt. You need to know someone even to get yourself admitted to a hospital. If you do not know anyone, you are dirt."

At the moment, people fear the Palestinian rule more than the Israeli administration. For example, there is a Bedouin family, from among the Beersheba refugees, that has been living in Rimal since 1948. They built their house without a building permit, as a matter of course. Several times the IDF issued demolition orders, which were never executed. They are now afraid that their 30-year tenure will be of no avail against the interests of the PLO apparatus officials, who covet the expensive land.

Almost every family in the Gaza refugee camps owes money to the Electricity Corporation. The Civil Administration occasionally cut off the power supply and then reconnected it. Now the residents are afraid that the Palestinian regime will cut it off because of its dire need for funds.

The health services are in very poor shape, for which Israel is basically responsible. The al-Shifa' government hospital is unable to provide much of the required medical treatment. There is not a single oncology clinic in the entire Strip. In fact, there is only one qualified oncologist. There is still no agreement on how people will receive treatment in Israel. People will simply die.

There is still no agreement on how Gaza laborers will work in Israel. The present bureaucracy will double and triple in size when Palestinian rule takes over. There are no development or welfare plans, and people are afraid that, at least at the beginning, oppression will be worse than before.

The standard of living will drop. The more it will drop, the less the population will support the peace process. Unless an accelerated economic development process is launched, people will be disenchanted with the PLO and cross over to Hamas, augmenting its strength. A local resident told me: "When a man does not have bread, what else does he have, except God?" At present, Gaza Strip fundamentalists fear that they will be persecuted, as they are in other Arab countries. But with popular support, "Allah is great."

"I have as yet to see anything happening," says a local young man at one of the social clubs which cropped up after the Oslo agreement. A club was established in each neighborhood. In the future, they will be the foundation of political power. "In the meantime, there is a curfew. I cannot go over to my brother's after 2100. First we would like to see the PLO lift the curfew."

Algeria

Presidency Spokesman Announces New Algerian Government

LD1504201794 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] Following the consultations that Prime Minister Mr. Mokdad Sifi held after his appointment as head of government, the formation of the new government was announced just half an hour ago by the official spokesman of the presidency, Mihoub Mihoubi.

[Begin Mihoubi recording] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, following the consulations held by Prime Minister Mr Mokdad Sifi, and on the basis of his proposals, Mr. Liamine Zeroual, head of state and minister of national defense, has appointed the following figures to form the new government:

—Mohamed Salah Dembri: minister of foreign affairs
—Abderrahmane Meziane Cherif: minister of interior, local authorities, environment and administrative reform [new]
—Mohamed Teguia: minister of justice
—Ahmed Benbitour: minister of finance [formerly energy minister]
—Mourad Benachnou: minister of industrial restructuring and participation [formerly economy minister]
—Amar Mekhloufi: minister of industry and energy [new]
—Mohamed Said Abadou: minister of war veterans [new]
—Mohamed Benamar Zerhouni: minister of communication [new]
—Amar Sakhri: minister of national education [new]
—Boubekeur Benbouzid: minister of higher education and scientific research [formerly minister delegate for universities and scientific research]
—Nourreddine Bahbouh: minister of agriculture [new]
—Cherif Rahmani: minister of equipment and urban planning [new]
—Mohamed Meghlaoui: minister of housing
—Yahia Kaidoum: minister of health and population [new]
—Sid-Ali Lebib: minister of youth and sports
—Hacene Laskri: minister of vocational training
—Slimane Shaykh: minister of culture [new]
—Sassi Lamouri: minister of religious affairs [new]
—Mohamed Achoubi: minister of labour and social protection [new]
—Tahar Allan: minister of posts and telecommunications
—Mohamed Arezki Isli: minister of transportation
—Sassi Aziza: minister of commerce [new]
—Redha Hamiani: minister of small and medium-sized enterprises
—Mohamed Bensalem: minister of tourism and handicraft [new]
—Ali Brahiti: minister delegate to the finance minister in charge of treasury [formerly minister delegate for budget]
—Noureddine Kesdali: minister delegate to the interior minister in charge of local authorities and administrative reform [new]
—Ahmed Attaf: secretary of state to the foreign minister in change of cooperation and maghreban affairs [new]
—Leila Aslaoui: secretary of state to the prime minister in charge of national solidarity and family [new]
—Said Bouchair: secretary general of the government.

It is worth noting that in March the head of state Mohamed Betchine as minister-adviser to the presidency [formerly in charge of military security]. Thank you. [end recording]

The new ministers will be installed at their ministeries tomorrow at ceremonies to be attended by the prime minister. After the ceremonies they will begin their new duties. Details on the new figures making up the new government will be given tomorrow.

New Minister Comments on Government

LD1504234594 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The new government, led by Mokdad Sifi, comprises 29 members including 24 ministers, two delegate ministers, two secretaries of state and a secretary general of the government. These include former and new ministers in addition to the creation of new posts. Communications Minister Benamar Zerhouni held a news conference this afternoon at the prime minister's headquarters in which he spoke about the new government.

[Begin Zerhouni recording] According to what was included on this government list, there are a total of 29 members, including 24 ministers, two delegate ministers, two secretaries of state and a secretary general of the government. There are 15 new members of the government, including four who had been in former governments, two changes of portfolio, 12 ministers kept their same portfolio, and five new ministries including delegate ministries and secretariats of state. These are:

1. Ministry of Industrial Restructuring and Partnership.
2. Ministry of Culture.
3. Ministry of Tourism and Handicraft.
4. Secretariat of State for National Solidarity and Family.
5. Local Authorities and Administrative Reform.

There have also been three promotions of delegate ministers to the post of minister. These are:

1. Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises.
2. Minister of Commerce.
3. Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

It is worth noting that the president of the state appointed Mohamed Betchine as a minister adviser at the presidency last March [end recording].

Social Liberal Party To Participate in Interim Parliament

LD1504165494 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] The Social Liberal Party today announced its participation in the Transitional National Council [interim parliament]. The party indicated that it regarded its participation as a duty for the preservation of public interest. For its part, the Workers' Party has announced that it would not take part in the Transitional National Council that is to be set up at the end of this month. It justified its decision by the fact that it did not attend the National Dialogue Conference.

Government Officially Asks Paris Club To Reschedule Debts

LD1704203394 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Excerpt] Algeria has officially asked the Paris Club to directly reschedule its foreign debts after signing the IMF letter of intent. These debts constitute of about 60 percent of its medium and long-term debts. Forthcoming talks with international banks will help reduce medium and long-term debt servicing. [passage omitted]

More on Debt Rescheduling

LD1704231794 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Algeria's Central Bank announced today that Algeria had officially contacted the Paris Club to reschedule its estimated 26-billion dollar foreign debt.

The same source clarified that the Paris Club debt rescheduling concerned bilateral debts which constitute 60 percent of Algeria's medium and long-term debts. The bank added that indebtedness would decrease by 4 billion dollars during this year and by 5 billion dollars over the period of a standby agreement with the International Monetary Fund from April until March 1995. (Rachid Benhelmi) reports:

[Begin (Benhelmi) recording] Algeria's Central Bank statement said that the Paris Club had been contacted after signing a letter of intent with the IMF in order to reschedule Algeria's bilateral debts which constitute about 60 percent of total medium and long-term debts. They include loans granted and guaranteed by governments or creditors' governmental institutions.

According to the Bank of Algeria, negotiations will start soon with international banks to reschedule repayment dates for medium-term bank debts.

It is expected, according to experts, that the rescheduling of payments for bank debts would reduce debt servicing in the medium and long-term.

Running parallel to these negotiations, discussions with some multilateral institutions, particularly the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the Arab Monetary Fund, the European Community, and other main bodies dealing with Algeria—like industrialists and traders—would take place. It is expected that these discussions would lead to clinching additional financial reserves to cover requirements in foreign financing.

The short-term debts which should be repaid within one year or less would not be subject to rescheduling and their interest would be paid on time. [end recording]

Security Services Kill 11, Arrest 13 'Terrorists'

LD1704202194 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Security services said in a statement that 11 terrorists were killed by the end of the week and 13 others arrested.

Egypt

Musa Urges 'Immediate, Deterrent Measures' Against Serbs

NC1704145894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1330 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Apr (MENA)—Egypt has expressed its deep concern over what is happening in the Bosnian town of Gorazde and the continuing Serbian aggression against it.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said in a statement today that this aggression is part of the ethnic cleansing that the Serbs are carrying out in Bosnia, describing it as a criminal aggression.

Musa added that reluctance in halting the Serbian aggression against Gorazde again raises the question of how the influential countries and NATO stand on these attacks.

He called for adopting immediate, deterrent measures against the Serbian aggression and to save the city's residents from the continuing bombardment. He also called for trying those responsible for the ethnic cleansing.

Envoy Leaves for Yemen With Messages for Salih, al-Bid

NC1704120394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1120 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Apr (MENA)—Ambassador Badr Hamman, assistant foreign minister for Arab affairs, left Cairo for Sanaa as President Mubarak's special envoy this afternoon. He will deliver two messages to Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP].

Ambassador Hammam said before leaving that the two messages deal with Egyptian-Yemeni relations and the Egyptian view of the Yemeni situation and stress the need for cooperation among all the Yemeni parties to surmount the situation in the country.

Hammam pointed out that his mission in Yemen falls within the context of the continuing Egyptian role of helping brother Yemenis overcome the situation the country has been encountering since last August. This role also seeks to preserve Yemeni unity and implement the pledge and accord document approved and signed by all the political parties in the Jordanian capital, Amman, on 20 February, he explained.

The Egyptian official added: We are confident that the political leaders in Yemen know of their responsibility to foster and maintain unity. We will cooperate together to achieve the collective goal of all the Yemeni parties, he said, adding: We will try to provide favorable conditions and common ground for bringing the parties together to overcome the crisis.

Korean Envoy on 'Unjust' U.S. Actions Against Iraq

JN1604155394 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1225 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 16 Apr (INA)—Kim Yong-sop, ambassador of North Korea in Cairo, has held the United States responsible for the continuation of the unjust embargo imposed on Iraq and its consequent human and material losses.

In an exclusive statement to INA's correspondent in Cairo, the Korean ambassador said U.S. determination and deliberate attempts to harm Iraq, and its use of the Security Council to apply illegal resolutions against it, violate international law and seriously jeopardize world peace and security.

He said U.S.-Western attempts to commit aggression against Iraq, besiege it, and interfere in its domestic affairs are all part of a old, and now new, colonialist scheme, led by the United States, to intimidate Third World nations, particularly countries that adhere to independent decision making and reject U.S. hegemony.

The North Korean ambassador said U.S. claims about the implementation of international resolutions, whether by Iraq or Korea, have fallen on deaf ears and have no legitimate foundation or relation to international law. He said these resolutions are void and are in line with U.S. interests in the world.

He said the Security Council has lost its true role in maintaining law and protecting nations and is now being used in an ugly manner to achieve U.S.-Western strategy whose features are today clearer than any time before.

The ambassador said his country firmly rejects the false propaganda campaign led by the United States against it under the pretext of Korea's rejection of the White House wishes and orders.

Mubarak's Envoy to Liberia Reports on Mission

NC1704132194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1245 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Apr (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today received a report from Assistant Foreign Minister Ambassador Sa'id Rif'at on the mission he undertook in Liberia as President Husni Mubarak's envoy.

Ambassador Rif'at stated that President Mubarak entrusted him with a message to the Liberian State Council, reflecting his interest in the situation in Liberia after the various parties signed a peace agreement. The mission was within the context of Egyptian efforts to settle the Liberian problem and its backing for the State Council, the transitional government, and constitutional measures.

Ambassador Rif'at added that during his visit to Liberia he met the State Council members and discussed developments in the Liberian problem and ways to settle it, with particular emphasis on disarming the factions and completing the formation of the transitional government.

He pointed out that the Liberian parties reiterated their eagerness to find a settlement and form a government. The Liberian powers expressed their appreciation of the Egyptian role and reiterated their desire to see Egypt contributing to the country's reconstruction once the peace agreement is implemented, he said.

Rif'at added that he assured Liberian officials of Egypt's preparedness to offer its expertise in development and to extend training assistance to Liberians in medicine, engineering, and nursing.

Party Leaders To Participate in Dialogue Committee

NC1604153594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1425 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Excerpt] Cairo, 16 Apr (MENA)—The National Democratic Party panel today reiterated President Mubarak's eagerness to guarantee the success of the national dialogue by providing all the necessary resources and opportunities for the various views and national efforts to attain the highest possible level of concurrence on the political, economic, and social issues that concern society.

In a statement issued following its meeting today, the panel announced that President Mubarak has decided to include all Egyptian party leaders in the committee in charge of preparing for the national dialogue. This will expand the membership of the committee, which will include representatives of the other categories announced earlier.

The statement added that President Mubarak is expected to invite the committee to a meeting with him after he returns from a scheduled visit to China this month. [passage omitted]

Muslim Brotherhood on Coptic Pope's Call on Jerusalem

NC1604090494 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 11 Apr 94 p 9

[Excerpts] Pope Shanudah, head of the Egyptian national church, has issued a call through AL-'ARABI to the grand imam, the shaykh of al-Azhar, to discuss with him practical ways to liberate Jerusalem. The grand imam welcomed cooperation with the brother Copts and the pope, and his eminence the mufti was enthusiastic about the idea and expressed his readiness to participate.

What is the starting point? AL-'ARABI has interviewed political figures and representatives from different national groups in order to form a common view on a starting point for this or any practical proposals to consider. [passage omitted]

Counselor Ma'mun al-Hudaybi, official spokesman of the Muslim Brotherhood, expressed support for Pope Shanudah's call and al-Azhar's favorable response to this call. He said that the agreement of the shaykh of al-Azhar and the pope on this issue is a good thing and reason for satisfaction. He called upon them to pursue this issue and continue to pressure the Egyptian Government and the Arab governments not to ignore the Jerusalem issue. One practical measure would be continuous public pressure on the government in order not to overlook this issue. While the status of Jerusalem is a matter for governments to deal with, this does not mean that the people should not get involved. Our role can be divided into two parts: The first is to collect donations to maintain the Islamic holy places in that city. The donations should go to a publicly trustworthy body. As for regaining Jerusalem itself, the major part of this task is the responsibility of the Arab and Islamic governments. We, as peoples, must exert maximum pressure through processions, seminars, conferences, and any other means to restore this city, which is dear to us all.

Al-Hudaybi stressed that the Muslim Brotherhood welcomes this call and is prepared to attend any al-Azhar-sponsored conference in which the national church and political forces will join in discussing practical ways to regain Jerusalem. He added that the real significance of the pope's call and al-Azhar's favorable response lies in the fact that it confirms beyond any doubt the absence of so-called sectarian strife in Egypt, and that the violence taking place now is not directed against the Copts alone; its victims are both Muslims and Copts. [passage omitted]

Coptic, Ethiopian Churches To Normalize Relations

NC1604191294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1805 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 16 Apr (MENA)—Ending a 20-year rift, the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church have agreed to normalize relations, according to a source at the papal seat of the Coptic Church.

The Coptic synod, led by Pope Shanudah III, approved a protocol regulating relations between the two churches. The protocol was prepared by a joint committee and discussed by both sides. The protocol will open a new chapter in relations between the two churches, stressing their amity, proximity, and common traditions of faith, according to the same source.

'Conditions' in Territories Blamed for Violence

NC1504183394 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 9 Apr 94 p 9

[Editorial: "The Land of Fire and Hatred"]

[Text] It was a noticeable scene last week to see dozens of Palestinian youngsters pelting the Israeli trucks withdrawing from Gaza and Jericho with stones. The trucks were carrying Israeli police equipment to pave the way for the entry of the Palestinian police force. The Palestinians were supposed to celebrate the withdrawal of Israel troops from their country, which has been living under occupation for almost 30 years.

However, it seems that the bitterness is deep rooted, and why not? Throughout the years of the intifadah, the Israeli occupation troops killed, wounded, and jailed Palestinians daily without mercy. The deep-rooted bitterness felt by the Palestinians became manifest a few days ago when a Palestinian youngster committed a suicide operation in northern Israel against a passenger bus, killing 8 Israelis and wounding 50 others. What is so strange about this after dozens of Palestinians were killed and hundreds others wounded at the al-Ibrahimi Mosque 40 days ago in a treacherous attack during the dawn prayers in the month of Ramadan?

These conditions, which are bad by any standard, are to blame for the violence that claims the lives of innocent people. These conditions make it incumbent on the Israeli and Palestinian negotiators to do their utmost, and to do it fast, toward implementing the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, thus easing the hostilities that can be eliminated only through cooperation and goodwill. The burden of this largely falls on the shoulders of Israel because for long years the Palestinians have been subjected to acts of murder, oppression, terrorism, and brutality. The sooner Israel recognizes the Palestinian legitimate rights, the better the atmosphere will be for peace to be created in the land of peace, which for more than half a century has been the land of fire.

Without greater, faster, and bolder steps toward peace, the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, solutions, and agreements will be prone to collapse, something that does not augur well not only for the two parties but for the entire region.

Inter-Arab Trade, Common Market Viewed

NC1704122094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1110 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Apr (MENA)—Mahmud al-'Arabi, chairman of the General Federation of the Chambers of Commerce, has stated that the Arab common market can withstand no delay, particularly in view of world economic developments and the ongoing competition to set up free trade areas and attract investment.

In a statement today, al-'Arabi pointed out that inter-Arab trade today represents under 12 percent of collective Arab foreign trade. He noted that Arab investments in the Arab world are limited, although over $850 billion is being invested elsewhere. He called for adopting positive measures to attract part of the Arab capital being invested in foreign states.

Al-'Arabi pointed out that the necessary foundation for a common Arab market exists but that it needs a set of measures to be perfected. He explained that the required measures are to facilitate the movement of goods and flow of trade among Arab states, reduce shipping charges, eliminate customs barriers, and encourage bilateral agreements as a basis for a common Arab market.

Ugandan Vice President Arrives for 1-Week Visit

NC1704081694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0738 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Apr (MENA)—Ugandan Vice President Samson Kisekka arrived in Cairo today on one-week visit to Egypt. He was met at the airport by Dr. Yusuf Wali, deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture, livestock, and land reclamation.

Discusses Relations With Wali

NC1704155294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1430 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Apr (MENA)—Dr. Yusuf Wali, deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture and land reclamation, met today with Ugandan Vice President Dr. Samson Kisekka and the delegation accompanying him who are currently visiting Cairo.

They reviewed a number of issues of mutual interest, primarily the current situation in Africa.

During the meeting, Dr. Wali emphasized the firm relations between the two countries and Egypt's readiness to supply Uganda with Egyptian agricultural products, especially cotton and oil products. Wali also agreed to increase scholarships for Ugandans at the Egyptian international agricultural center.

The Ugandan official said his country looks forward to enhancing bilateral ties and economic and agricultural cooperation with Egypt.

The Ugandan official is expected to meet several officials and visit major agricultural and industrial projects.

MENA Chief Denies Plan To Set Up Office in Tel Aviv

NC1704114494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1040 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Apr (MENA)—Mustafa Najib, chairman of the board of directors and chief editor of MENA, has denied a report published in a recent issue of the magazine ROSE AL-YUSUF that the agency is preparing to establish an office in Tel Aviv. He affirmed that the agency has not sent any delegation to Tel Aviv for this purpose.

He said the agency is considering establishing a presence in Gaza and Jericho in coordination with the PALESTINIAN NEWS AGENCY (WAFA) after Palestinian self-rule is established there.

Campaign Launched in Cairo, Asyut Against Fugitives

Convicts Captured in Cairo

NC1604180594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1610 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 16 Apr (MENA)—The security service in western Cairo has launched a campaign in shanty towns and remote areas in the past two days to capture fugitive criminals and escaped convicts.

Major General Mahmud Wajdi, director of the Cairo General Detective Department, has stated that the campaigns resulted in the seizure of 66 firearms, persons involved in 26 drug cases, 296 suspects in political cases, and 12 fugitive convicts. He said that 410 cases of individual gangs and another three-member gang specializing in car robbery have been uncovered.

As for the political suspects, Wajdi said the arrested 296 persons are being checked to determine whether they belong to extremist groups.

Maj. Gen. Wajdi added that campaigns that covered northern Cairo have unveiled 29 cases of narcotics and 11 criminal cases and have seized five firearms.

During these last campaigns, nine persons suspected of illegal political activity and 125 fugitive convicts were captured.

Maj. Gen. Wajdi pointed out that the campaigns started two days ago in various sectors in Cairo at the instructions of Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi.

Fugitives, 'Terrorists' Arrested in Asyut

NC1604161394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1520 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Asyut, Upper Egypt, 16 Apr (MENA)—The centers and villages of Asyut Governorate have been the scene of intensified security sweeps to arrest escaped criminals and terrorists.

Asyut Security Chief Major General Majdi al-Basyuni has said that the sweeps, which started early this morning and covered remote and shanty towns, resulted in catching 28 terrorists wanted in connection with various cases.

Maj. Gen. al-Basyuni added that these terrorists included nine in the city of Asyut and surrounding villages and urban centers, eight in al-Qusiyah, six in the city of Manfalut, two in al-Badari, two in Abu Tij, and two in al-Ghana'im.

The sweeps involved the State Security Detectives, Central Security, regular troops, the police, and Public Security forces. A total of 10 weapons—two automatic rifles, five pistols, and three rifles of various types—were seized during the sweeps.

The teams involved in the sweeps arrested 197 persons on suspicion of illegal political activity, who are being interrogated, and 141 fugitive convicts.

To facilitate full security control of the governorate, Asyut was recently divided into four security zones. Each zone is headed by an assistant security chief.

'Extremists' Handed Over in Asyut

NC1604161494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1545 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 16 Apr (MENA)—Asyut Governor Samih al-Sa'id has announced that popular committees this morning handed over to the Asyut security service 16 extremists who repented after being misled by fugitive extremist leaders who deceived them into believing that they were fighting for religion.

The governor added that the security services will release these persons after authenticating their repentance. He affirmed that current popular efforts all over the governorate will help wipe out fugitive terrorists and those involved in murder, sabotage, and hostile activities now that the help they used to receive from these people has stopped.

Islamic Group Claims Responsibility for Train Attack

NC1704182794 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] The extremist Islamic Group organization has claimed responsibility for the attack that targeted a tourist train last night as it was passing through al-Nakhilah village in Abu Tij, Asyut Governorate, on the way from Aswan to Cairo.

The incident did not result in any casualties. The security services searched the area surrounding the scene of the incident.

This is the ninth attack against trains in the past two years and the first since last March.

Explosion in South Cairo; No Casualties Reported

NC1504193094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1910 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 15 Apr (MENA)—A crude homemade device exploded tonight in front of building No. 3 in Madinat al-Ikha' in [Cairo's southern] neighborhood of al-Ma'adi. There were no damages, injuries, or casualties.

This was stated by an Interior Ministry security source which said that the explosion happened at 1830 today and that the Cairo Security Directorate officials and the criminal laboratory experts immediately went to the site. It added that the search for the culprits is under way and that the public prosecution office has been notified so as to start its investigation.

Defendents in Attempted Assassination File Appeals

NC1604153694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1250 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Excerpt] Cairo, 16 Apr (MENA)—MENA has learned that the convicts sentenced in connection with the attempt against Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi submitted appeals to reconsider their sentences to the military judiciary a few hours before the expiration of the deadline.

The military court issued death sentences against nine defendants, four of them at large; 15-year sentences at hard labor against three defendants; five-year sentences at hard labor against one defendant; and a three-year sentence against one defendant who is at large. One defendant, who is still at large, was acquitted.

If the court turns down these appeals, the sentences become final.

The defendants announced at the 17 March session, during which the sentences were issued, that they would not file any appeals. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Amir Meets With Prime Minister, New Ministers

LD1604113394 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic
1000 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] His Highness the Amir received at 0900 Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister who presented the ministers appointed in the latest cabinet reshuffle.

Defense Minister Ahmad al-Hamud al-Jabir al-Sabah; Ahmad Khalid al-Kulayb, social affairs and labor minister; Habib Jawhar Hayat, minister of public works and housing minister of state; Jasim Muhammad al-'Awn, minister of communications, electricity, and water; 'Abd al-'Aziz Dakhil al-Dakhil, planning minister and minister of state for cabinet affairs; Oil Minister Dr. 'Abd al-Muhsin Mid'aj al-Mid'aj; Interior Minister 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al- Sabah; Health Minister Dr. 'Abd al-Rahman Salih al-Muhaylan; Dr. 'Ali Fahd al-Zumay', minister of religious endowments and Islamic affairs; and Hilal Mishari al-Mutayri, minister of commerce and industry, all made the constitutional oath to His Highness the Amir, to mark their appointments in their new posts.

Interior Minister Comments on Iraqi Forces, Other Topics

LD1604090394 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0613
GMT
16 Apr 94

[Text] Kuwait, 16 Apr—Kuwaiti Interior Minister Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah said in an interview published today that "the Iraqi forces amassed south of Iraq are not far from Kuwait," but he reassured citizens that "these forces, although they are a cause of disturbance to the Kuwaiti authorities, are present—as has been repeatedly announced—to quell the rebellion in southern Iraq."

Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah told the AL-WATAN newspaper in his first interview as interior minister that the Ministries of Interior, Defense, and National Guard were "prepared to block any possible aggression, especially as these forces are operating under joint and clear coordination."

Responding to a question on his future plans for the Interior Ministry, he said "work in the Interior Ministry is different to that in defense but the minister is required to work in the light of the state's general strategy."

"There are many ideas, including developing work in the departments, circulating some officials, and finding ways capable of handling citizens' dealings as quickly as possible," he said.

He added, "the ministries and the state's apparatus suffer from a shortage of qualified human cadres" and indicated that modern equipment would be required to compensate the shortage and overcome bureaucracy.

Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah said there were "several ideas to develop the work of sentries and village chiefs to find a bigger and more comprehensive role for them.

"I am not superman and I alone cannot carry out all achievements. That is impossible without the intertwining of efforts, which would emerge by concentrating on ingraining the spirit of responsibility and confidence in security men, be they small or large." In that context, he stressed his rejection of centralization of the administration.

"Kuwait's interest is above any consideration and I will not delay in punishing and reprimanding all who try to disturb the security of this country and the unity of the people of Kuwait," he said.

Asked about some security members who sullied their positions and their work places with their conduct, he said that "this matter cannot be considered a phenomenon but there are some individual acts that give the security apparatus a bad name and we will try to select elements of high skill and abilities to carry out excellent performances."

He spoke of his wish to establish the principle of every citizen being a sentry so that he could, in the future, be responsible for his country's security, which was a joint responsibility.

Asked about tackling the problems of illegal residents and the position of Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis, the minister said that he could not go into those two issues at present until he had seen all figures and information found in reports.

Yemen

Salih Meets Jordanian Envoy, Receives Message

JN1604200394 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio
Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Excerpt] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, along with Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani, member of the Presidential Council, today received brother Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Jordanian Royal Hashemite Court and envoy of His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal of the fraternal Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The Jordanian envoy conveyed to the brother chairman a message from his brother, His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal, on issues of interest to brotherly relations between the two fraternal countries, as well as the efforts [words indistinct] made by the brothers in Jordan to bring views closer, contain the political crisis, and promote efforts to implement the accord document signed in the Jordanian capital, Amman. This is meant to safeguard Yemeni unity and democracy.

The message stressed the need to preserve unity, since it is a national and pan-Arab achievement and a gain for the Yemeni people and all the sons of the Arab nation. Yemeni unity is also an outstanding achievement amid pan-Arab divisions. The message stressed the importance of resorting to dialogue on all levels, stopping military and media developments, and activating official agencies so they exercise their duties to implement the accord document. The message further asserted Jordan's willingness to continue to make brotherly efforts and all that can help [words indistinct]. [passage omitted including indistinct portions]

Salih Notes Efforts To 'Partition' Homeland

JN1704152294 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Speech by Presidential Council Chairman 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih at the police academy in Sanaa on 16 April—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] All noble patriots must remain steadfast. They must define their position toward the elements that seek to partition the homeland using desecrated money, money that we would have liked to have used on development rather than on the purchase of weapons and explosives and disturbing public order. This money could have been better spent building a hospital or school or treating an incurable disease instead of [words indistinct] and disturbing the public peace.

Dear brothers: We are absolutely confident that all unionist patriots of all political organizations and parties—the General People's Congress [GPC], the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], the Yemeni Reform Grouping, and others—will place the interests of the homeland above all narrow and selfish interests.

We would have liked for this crisis not to have been dragged out. The struggler 'Abdallah al-Sallal was a martyr of the political crisis that was fabricated to redivide the Yemeni homeland. This unity was brought about through peaceful and democratic means, in which there was no annexation or coercion. The unity was the result of prolonged dialogue that went on for years and culminated on 22 May 1990, the date that saw an end to the division of a homeland into two systems of government and to the legacies of imamism and the end of odious colonialism throughout the land. We engaged in protracted dialogue long enough. Things came to a head on many occasions and we battled and conspired against each other long enough. There was the 1972 war in which the victor was the loser. Then there was the second 1979 battle, in which the victor was also the loser. We are now working in earnestness and dedication and a sense of responsibility to defeat all schemes meant to fuel sedition within the ranks of the one Yemeni family. In that effort we are aided by all the dedicated unionist patriots of all the political groups and parties. We should work together toward defeating all these schemes that seek to split the national unity and reintroduce partition. The reintroduction of division would be a terrible ordeal. Division will not be permitted to return. There will not be a return to the state of affairs where there were the Democratic People's Republic of Yemen in the south and the Yemeni Arab Republic in the north of the homeland. That would be a disaster for all sections of this people, especially now that we have political pluralism, unity, and political parties throughout the country. Neither the GPC, nor the Yemeni Reform Grouping, nor the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, nor the Right Party, nor the League of the Sons of Yemen Party, nor the Democratic Nasirite Party, nor the YSP, nor any other political faction will be custodian in one half of the homeland or the other. The true and basic need is for these political parties to spread across the land. No one has the right of custodianship on what used to be known as the north of the homeland or what used to be known as the south of the homeland.

God forbid, if we were sucked into the schemes of the fabricators of the crisis, who were paid to tear the Yemeni unity asunder, and if the Yemeni people fought among themselves throughout the land, we would have to come to an understanding and sit at the negotiating table to solve this problem as happened in 1972 and 1979. In other words, as political groups and parties we must sit at the negotiating table and solve our problems before any harm is done. I thank all brothers and comrades who have played a positive role on the Political Forces Dialogue Committee for their efforts. I hope that each of them will remain a support for unity instead of secession and that they will not take the side of any political groups directly or indirectly, neither behind the scenes nor through the telephone, to tell this or that party they are in the right.

In my name and on behalf of my fellow members on the Presidential Council and the executive and legislative branches, I ask God's mercy for the soul of Marshal 'Abdallah al-Sallal, whose departure was a great loss to the homeland.

President Reacts, Comments on U.S. Helicopter Incident

JN1704174594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1710 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Apr (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has expressed his confidence that the downing of two U.S. helicopters in northern Iraq on 14 April is linked with an evil scheme prepared in advance by Washington, London, and Paris. Addressing a number of fighters, who participated in the liberation of al-Faw City six years ago, his excellency revealed that the ambassadors of the United States, Britain, and France summoned Iraq's representative at the United Nations on the day in which the incident involving the two planes took places and informed him that their countries would patrol the Zakho-Fa'idah highway without revealing the purpose of this.

The president noted that a memorandum from the Foreign Ministry following the meeting between Iraq's representative and the three ambassadors indicated that the language of the ambassadors was hopeful and reassuring and that the objective of their countries' deployment of the patrol was not provocative and that they have no intention of waging a confrontation with Iraq.

His Excellency President Saddam Husayn emphasized that the meeting among the ambassadors of the United States, Britain, and France and the ambassador of Iraq at the United Nations took place following instructions from their governments. He said the meeting was designed to serve an evil action whose nature he hoped will be become clear later. He said the meeting must have had a connection with those who were aboard the two downed helicopters.

His excellency pointed to the questions that were raised by many political observers about the mission of the helicopters, the identity and specialty of those who were on board, and what they may have had been carrying.

His excellency the president called the downing of the American helicopters by American fighters a scandal that has exposed a moral, spiritual, practical, and humanitarian weakness in the nations of the alliance led by Washington.

His excellency the president drew attention to the objectives of the enemy circles and the intentions they had in common with the media and propaganda organizations they control and manipulate so as to promote their interests and objectives. He said the premeditated goal of the operation became apparent as soon as the incident occurred, when certain suspect radio stations put out press statements claiming that Iraqi aircraft had downed two American helicopters.

His excellency said it was likely that if it were not for the fact that there were other casualties besides the Americans and the fear that the joint inquiry would bring out the facts, the media would have stuck to the allegations and used them as grounds to level charges against Iraq as they have done in the past and continue to do now.

President Saddam Husayn recalled the chapters of Iraqi confrontation against Iran's hostile scheme and the pictures of Iraq's victory over these evil objectives. He said that the liberation of al-Faw was the first step on the road to victory. He said that the enemies were very concerned with entrenching a fact that is alien to Arab heritage, but which they have become known for by others recently—namely, the land that is taken from Arabs will not return to them and that Arab armies cannot launch counterattacks to liberate their lands.

The president concentrated on the role of the Zionist quarters in spreading despair among the Arabs. He said that Zionism is working in this direction in all its activities and moves, and with all its branches and potential.

The president stressed that the liberation of al-Faw foiled all these false theories. He said: For the first time in contemporary Arab history an Arab country liberated its land without any political bargains or compromises. This was achieved in the liberation of al-Faw.

President Saddam Husayn added: Al-Faw was the beginning, where wills clashed. A city was liberated without any political intervention or foreign factors. Victories were then achieved when every inch on which the aggressors encroached was liberated.

His excellency shed light on the military lesson crystallized by Iraqi determination on the ground of confrontation against the Iranian enemy to liberate al-Faw and every inch of Iraq's territory. He said: No army, in a long war, can claim that its enemy will not achieve any victories on the front because the enemy can become stronger and superior and can benefit from other factors that will take this army by surprise.

In light of this lesson, His Excellency President Saddam Husayn urged the commanders not to belittle any field action, combat front, or move no matter how small. He underscored that it is these small moves and steps that add up to the final result.

His excellency the president cautioned, however, that the forest should not be overlooked for the trees, and that small factors should not distract the commander from the determination that the final strategy and results must be to his advantage. He reaffirmed the importance of handling small moves on the front on the basis of this overall strategy.

His excellency the president expressed his confidence that the practical implementation of this concept is possible not only in the military field, but that it is also possible to translate this concept into practice in the areas of politics, economics, social life, and security matters.

His Excellency President Saddam Husayn expressed his faith and conviction that the leadership in Iraq is capable of effecting changes in the overall situation if the pressure increases and the situation becomes vulnerable. If such a thing were to happen, the Iraqi leadership, the president added, would also be capable of introducing new factors into the picture, factors that could absorb any additional elements that might be brought into play by the enemy.

His excellency the president expressed his full confidence in the future of the confrontation between Iraq and the U.S.-led alliance, saying that the enemies' anti-Iraq posture can be likened to a man seizing the sword by its blade. When the owner of the sword pulls the sword forcefully, the adversary will find himself compelled to either release his grip around the sword or risk losing his fingers. In either case, he will have to release the sword.

BABIL: Helicopter Incident Shows Need for Allied Withdrawal

JN1604110694 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0755 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Apr (INA)—BABIL has stated that our people and the international community as a whole must remain fully alert in order to confront the U.S. insinuations and designs aimed at harming Iraq by all possible means, both inside and outside the UN Security Council.

In an article today, the paper says that the incident involving two helicopters in Iraqi Kurdistan demonstrates to the entire world the nature of the complicated and dangerous situation faced by that dear part of Iraq under the coalition troops. It says that this situation requires the employment of all possible political means to secure the withdrawal of the aggressors from the region and the return of the Iraqi state to Kurdistan in order to help our Kurdish people and serve peace and security in the entire region.

BABIL adds that, since the latest UN Security Council session on so-called human rights, the United States has been engaged in a systematic campaign against Iraq and has accused it of masterminding attacks against UN officials and observers in Kurdistan. This is despite Iraq's repeated denials of such allegations. This proves Washington's premeditated intentions against Iraq, especially to carry out a fresh aggression against Iraq, perhaps without referring to the Security Council.

Paper Says U.S. Reaping Results of 'Erroneous' Policy

JN1604094494 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0652 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Apr (INA)—AL-'IRAQ has stressed that after the shooting down of two of its own helicopters in northern Iraq, the United States has begun to reap the fruits of its erroneous policy and flagrant and rejected interference in Iraq's domestic affairs in cooperation with its allies.

In an article published today, the newspaper says that this incident in northern Iraq, where foreign troops are deployed in an illegitimate and illegal manner without any logical or legal justification, means that the situation prevailing in that area is one of confusion, lawlessness, and disorder, especially in light of the absence of a central authority capable of halting the security deterioration or curbing the dangerous phenomena there.

The paper adds that if wrong premises lead to wrong conclusions, then any fair analyst must now be aware of the size of the crime that the United States has committed against our people in the autonomous region when it embraced the gangs and highway robbers there and sponsored their subversive activities against innocent citizens, thus depriving them of any sense of security, stability, and dignity.

AL-'IRAQ explains that in light of the unstable situation in the northern areas where foreign troops are deployed or controlled by agents and mercenaries, it is important to emphasize that circumstances of this kind must lead to many mistakes of the kind which led to the downing of two U.S. helicopters by U.S. warplanes.

Concluding its article, the paper says that the U.S. attempts to exploit the situation in the autonomous region to implement both overt and covert schemes against our homeland and people—both Arabs and Kurds—through employing agents and mercenaries to use them as pawns in its conspiratorial game will lead to other woes, for as you sow, so will you reap.

'Deteriorating' U.S. Morale Blamed for Helicopter Incident

JN1604081994 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0624 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Apr (INA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH has said that the American mindset, which accepts the unhesitating and hasty killing of the children of other peoples, is behind the shooting down of the two U.S. helicopters in northern Iraq.

In an article today on the downing of the two helicopters, the paper adds that deteriorating morale among U.S. officers, which is a traditional flaw in U.S. national security, makes them panic and act irrationally whenever they have doubts about the existence of an enemy force. U.S. propaganda and media incitement against Iraq added to the U.S. officers panic, thus making them act hastily, killing 26 Americans and Europeans, who they mistook for people of another nationality—which would make it okay to kill them.

The paper adds: As in previous cases when he lied to Congress, Clinton this time tried to peddle another lie among the U.S. public to justify this incident and to contain any negative repercussions. He claimed that the dead were on a humanitarian mission assigned to them by the United Nations. However, the United Nations did not wait long to answer, immediately responding that it had nothing to do with the mission nor had it asked anybody to undertake this mission. The United Nations also said that the two helicopters received orders from the United States.

Saddam Receives Commanders, Delivers Speech

JN1704175794 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Staff Field Marshal President Saddam Husayn, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, has met with several heroic fighters and officials who had the honor of taking part in the execution of Operation Blessed Ramadan, the operation carried out to liberate al- Faw, the city of sacrifice and the gate of great victory.

The leader president received the congratulations of the heroic fighters at a hall bedecked with the flag of great Iraq. The flag had the name of martyr Staff General 'Adnan Khayrallah, whose death was a loss to the people and the Armed Forces, engraved on it in appreciation of his efforts to build the Armed Forces and enable them to defend great Iraq and vindicate its sovereignty and territories, and also in recognition of the great pioneering role he played in the liberation of al-Faw.

The president received the great fighters Staff General Husayn Kamil Hasan, who was in charge of the Republican Guards; Brigadier General 'Abd Hamid Mahmud, who was the president's escort; Udayy Saddam Husayn and Qusayy Saddam Husayn, whose involvement in the battle was ordered by the leader, may God protect him, so they may perform their duties toward the homeland; the staff of the Armed Forces General Command; the Army Corps and division commanders who had the honor of contributing to the liberation of al-Faw; and escorts of his excellency the president, may God protect him.

The leader president, may God grant him certain victory, offered his congratulations on this eternal occasion to the sons of his steadfast people, as well as the personnel affiliated with his valiant Armed Forces. He recalled this splendid epic waged by the Iraqis and the Armed Forces personnel in defense of their territories, sovereignty, and independence. He also commended their efforts to safeguard land and honor.

The president, may God protect him, evoked God's mercy on the souls of the martyrs who fell on the territory of al-Faw. He also expressed his affection for their families, noting appreciation for their positions. He said that the state, the homeland, and the march are thankful to these patient families.

His excellency the president, may God grant him victory, delivered a valuable and comprehensive speech, addressing the injustice done to Iraqis and Arabs when they were branded as people who are incapable of regaining lost territory. Nonetheless, al-Faw was the beginning. In al-Faw, there was a clash of two wills. And in this clash, one will was defeated and a city was liberated without any (?political) move and without the intervention of any external factors, the president said.

In this clash, the aggressive will was [words indistinct]. It recognized in writing that it was defeated. It wished that it had never lived to see what happened on the war front.

His excellency the president, may God protect him, also spoke on the Iraqis' patience and jihad in the course of their efforts to cope with the embargo, reaffirming that the good is coming, not because the evildoers intend to remove evil, but rather because the evil hand that is gripping the sword by the blade will find itself compelled to release the sword's blade when its owner pulls it forcefully.

Assembly Willing To Discuss Issues With Kuwaiti Delegation

JN1604182594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1750 GMT 16Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Apr (INA)—The Iraqi National Assembly has declared its willingness to discuss all outstanding issues with a delegation from the Kuwaiti parliament in the service of pan-Arab issues and the interests of the two sides, leading to stability and barring dispute.

In a statement to INA in reaction to a recent speech by Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sa'd al-'Abdallah, Sa'di Mahdi Salih, speaker of the Iraqi National Assembly, said: We are ready to discuss with a delegation from the Kuwaiti parliament all outstanding issues in the service of pan-Arab issues and the interests of the two sides, leading to stability and barring dispute. Many parties, which have become well known and exposed, are seeking to fuel disputes following the Mother of Battles. These parties are seeking to increase doubts, misgivings, and fears in the ranks of the Arabs and drive the rulers of Kuwait to the point of no return in order to serve the interests of these parties, including tampering with the security of the region, capturing its wealth, and impoverishing their peoples.

The National Assembly speaker added: We proposed this earlier to several Arab states. We suggested a delegation from the Kuwaiti parliament visit Iraq. We said we are willing to open the door to it and to give it access to all information and facts to confirm that claims that Iraq holds Kuwaiti nationals are exposed lies and fabrications that have suspect and mean political objectives. It has been proven to us that the Government of Kuwait did not convey our proposals to the parliament because it did not want the parliament to know the facts as they exist and to know Iraq's true Arab policy.

The National Assembly speaker added: While reiterating this proposal, and our seriousness about this issue, we do not mind having other Arab parties, to be agreed upon, take part in the discussions. We also do not mind an Arab side making shuttle tours between us and the Kuwaiti parliament to reach mature ideas in this regard and so as not to allow the government officials in Kuwait to drive things toward the worst, as they did before 2 August 1990.

The Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister delivered a speech a few days ago in which he cited a pack of lies about Iraq and its positions. He also spoke about the situation in Kuwait. The following is part of what he said: "The world is now like a big volcano. We do not know where and when it will erupt. Small countries stand fearfully before this terrible scene and are looking for a safe haven to avoid the danger of fierce storms, preserve their freedom and sovereignty, and protect their entity and independence."

Editor Denies Israeli Paper Claims on 'Secret' Contacts

JN1704095594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0918 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Apr (INA)—The political editor of the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY has denied in part and parcel the allegations published by the Zionist paper THE JERUSALEM POST of 3 April in which it claimed that contacts, which it described as "secret and important," are being held between Iraq and "Israel" through Palestinian and European parties in order to expand what it called the scope of the Middle East peace process.

The INA political editor commented: The objective of propagating such lies is to tarnish the reputation of Iraq and its clear, faithful pan-Arab policy, which is not built on the basis of rotten corridor deals and narrow interests.

The political editor added: Such things are useless attempts to peddle exposed lies which no longer fool anybody.

Army General, Others Reportedly Executed for Coup Attempt

NC1504182294 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] In its issue today, KUIRDISTAN NWAY cites a source [not further identified] as saying that head of the Iraqi regime Saddam Husayn has ordered the execution by firing squad of General Salim al-Hamduni on charges of planning a coup.

The paper says that the body was handed over to the family but no prayers were allowed. The paper notes that Gen. al-Hamduni had been awarded the al-Qadisiyah and nine other medals for valor. KURDISTAN NWAY points out that other ranking commanders might also have been killed during the campaign.

Coalition Aircraft Drops Flares on Ninawa 12 Apr

JN1604153294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1355 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Apr (INA)—The aircraft of the U.S.-led anti-Iraq coalition dropped two flares in the afternoon of last Tuesday [12 April] on the Ba'shiqah region in Ninawah Governorate, 400 km north of Baghdad.

INA's correspondent in the governorate cited informed sources as saying the two flares burned out before reaching the ground without causing any damage.

It is worth mentioning that the Ninawa Governorate includes the archaeological city of al-Hadar. The first al-Hadar festival opened on 14 April with the participation of dozens of Arab and foreign art groups.

Regime Forces Attack Marshland Area, Execute Residents

NC1604155694 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1440 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] The authorities of tyrant Saddam have added a new crime to their record of atrocities with the execution of a number of innocent civilians in the marshlands of Maysan.

According to our sources, the tyrant's forces waged a ferocious attack on the (al-Sukhraydah) area in Maysan. Having blockaded the area and kept it under a sustained barrage of fire, the forces finally swept over it, killing and wounding some inhabitants and arresting others.

Our sources say that the tyrant's forces did not stop at this but executed seven (al-Sukhraydah) inhabitants by firing squads in front of their families. Here are the names of the executed men: Hulayyil Badr 'Awf al-Bukhaytawi, 'Abbar Juwaysim, Yusuf Khaylul al-Sawa'idah, 'Abbas Furayyij, Muhammad Muqashshar al-Bukhaytawi, Jawad Kazim al-Bukhaytawi, and Ghazi Lazim al-Bukhaytawi.

Our sources add that the regime's forces killed livestock and demolished houses in (al-Sukhraydah) before leaving, then they lobbed more shells into the area.

Iranian Artillery Shells Kurdish Border Areas

NC1604174994 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] On 13 April Iranian artillery bombarded the border areas of (Kuna Sus), [name indistinct], (Rajibadah), (Mirasawah), and Sarakal in the al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate. However, the bombardment, praise be to God, did not cause any casualties. It should be recalled that the Iranian artillery shelled the (Kanisan) border area on the night of 8-9 April, killing one citizen and injuring four.

SAIRI: Regime Preparing 'Extensive' Offensive

NC1504190694 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] The Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI]—Kurdistan branch—has stated that the Iraqi regime is getting ready to launch an extensive offensive against the marshlands east of the Maysan Governorate.

In a statement issued recently, SAIRI said that the regime has amassed huge numbers of troops equipped with mortars and small gunboats near the marshlands. The statement affirmed that the southern revolutionaries had carried out several heroic operations against the regime's troops and succeeded in destroying a number of positions on the road between [word indistinct] and al-Musharrah. The revolutionaries also managed to destroy the al-Tayyib bridge east of al-'Amarah.

Meanwhile, the southern revolutionaries distributed leaflets among the regime's army personnel warning them against taking part in any attack on the civilians in the marshlands.

'Terrorist' Killed During Attack on Jerusalem Bus

TA1804114694 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1130 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] There was a terrorist attack in north Jerusalem a few minutes ago. As far as we know, three Israelis were wounded when a terrorist struck at them with an ax. Our police affairs correspondent Tali Katzenelson reports:

We have only initial reports about the incident. Police forces arrived at the scene a few minutes ago. According to what we know, an Arab terrorist from East Jerusalem was traveling on a No. 25 bus near the entrance to the Neve Ya'aqov neighborhood in north Jerusalem when he pulled out an ax and began to strike at the passengers. The terrorist wounded three people before a soldier from a nearby military base shot him in the back, killing him. The wounded were taken to a nearby Army base.

'Terrorist' Suspected Hamas Member

TA1804132094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] Four Israelis were wounded in the Jerusalem attack. One sustained serious wounds and three sustained light injuries. Our police affairs correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that a 17-year-old Arab from East Jerusalem got on the bus in the Neve Ya'aqov neighborhood and attacked passengers with an ax. He was shot by an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldier, wounded, and captured. Our correspondent Ofra Nehmad reports that two of the casualties were wounded by shots fired by the soldier. The wounded were taken to Hadassah-'En Kerem Hospital. An unidentified man called Qol Yisra'el's Arabic Department to announce that the terrorist belonged to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement].

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that there is a reasonable chance to conclude the negotiations with the PLO within several weeks. Rabin told a meeting of the coalition's Knesset factions that the evacuation from Gaza and Jericho will be short and will last two to three weeks. He stressed that Israel will not agree to the PLO continuing in the peace talks and at the same time reaching agreements with Hamas on attacks inside Israel. For us, that is the red line, the prime minister said. He noted that Israel acted in Cairo and in other places to foil such an agreement and will judge developments by results on the ground.

Cabinet To Warn PLO on Cooperation With Hamas

TA1704113394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] The cabinet today decided to warn the PLO against cooperating with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], in the wake of reports on possible cooperation between the two organizations. This was reported at the close of the weekly cabinet session. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the cabinet approved the issuance of 20,000 work permits for Palestinians, mainly in farming. The laborers will be 35 years old, or above. The cabinet also approved the allocation of 30 million shekels for government-initiated projects and social welfare payments for the Palestinians in the territories. For the time being, the closure will continue indefinitely.

Knesset Member Ori Or, chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, said today that the cooperation announced by Hamas and Fatah in the territories is not an agreement between the leadership of the two organizations. These are understandings made by local Gaza activists. The understandings were made because some Hamas members are hoping for jobs in the autonomy administration, and in view of the interest shared by both organizations to prevent bloodshed in Gaza. Ori Or further said that there are serious difference among Hamas members. Activists in the territories claim that they should take part in the PLO administration in order to survive when autonomy is established. At the same time, some of the organization leaders believe that terror is the only path to be pursued.

Likud has called on the prime minister to stop negotiations with the PLO if it does not immediately stop cooperating with Hamas. Likud faction chairman Moshe Qatzav stated it is now clear that the working assumption of the Oslo agreement, according to which the PLO would fight Hamas, is silly.

PLO-Hamas Accord Would Invalidate Agreement

TA1704150394 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin confirmed at today's cabinet session that an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and Foreign Ministry team have been doing staff work on the Syrian issue. The cabinet today approved the entry of 20,000 inhabitants of the territories into Israel in spite of the closure, which was extended until further notice.

As for reports about cooperation between Hamas and Fatah, cabinet ministers asserted that this would lead to the annulment of the Declaration of Principles with Israel. Our political correspondent Udi Segal reports:

[Begin recording] [Segal] An IDF and a Foreign Ministry team have been working on a peace package with Syria, Yitzhaq Rabin confirmed in today's cabinet session. The teams were instructed to examine several possibilities, particularly with regard to the security issue, but none of these mentions a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights. Rabin was angry about the leaks to the press of the document formulated by Major General Ilan Biran, and said he was opposed to holding a cabinet debate on the peace package. A debate here would be tantamount to a public debate, he said. The ministers, at least some of them, accepted Rabin's position with understanding. [passage omitted]

Another issue tackled by the cabinet was the report about an agreement—a kind of distribution of labor—between the PLO and Hamas, whereby the former would allow the latter to go on staging terror attacks against Israelis. This report was not corroborated by the briefings given by IDF officers and the head of the Shin Bet. Nevertheless, Rabin and other cabinet ministers asserted that the issue would be looked into and that if the existence of such an agreement is confirmed, this would invalidate the Oslo agreement.

[Education Ministry Official Rubinstein] We did not get any confirmation of these reports. However, in order to remove any doubt, we are hereby announcing in advance that such a development would thwart and sabotage any arrangement with the PLO and would actually invalidate the understanding reached with it.

[Segal] In contrast, Tourism Minister 'Uzi Bar'am believes the whole thing is a lie.

[Bar'am] The matter will be checked, of course, but it is most probably Hamas propaganda. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Knesset Member Binyamin Netanyahu urged the prime minister to present to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee the peace package with Syria drafted by the IDF.

British Officials Urged To Take Action Against Hamas

TA1804045394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Report by Alan Ben-'Ami]

[Excerpts] Both Israeli and British officials have begun working to have Hamas declared a terrorist organization in Britain. According to Israeli sources, the Islamic fundamentalist group is using England as a safe haven for planning attacks and transferring funds and operational instructions to its terrorist squads in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Details of how Hamas operates in Britain—in some cases using Islamic social and charitable organizations as a cover for planning operations, raising or laundering funds, then transferring money and orders to the territories—have all been passed on to the relevant British security authorities.

This is not the first time such information has been passed on to Britain. More than a year ago, the British authorities were told that their country was a major base for Hamas leaders, with direct links to the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam murder squads here. This followed the arrest of two high-ranking Hamas operatives, Muhammad Salah and Muhammad Jarrad. [passage omitted]

Now, according to a well-placed source, in the wake of increased Hamas terror activity and especially the bomb attacks in 'Afula and Hadera, the British authorities are more likely to take action. What is needed, according to the source, is formal Israeli diplomatic representations to Britain, along the lines of the diplomatic offensive by Israel and the U.S. to get King Husayn to crack down on Hamas members and their activities in Jordan. For the British authorities to act against Hamas under Britain's Prevention of Terrorism Act, Israel will have to show that Hamas engages in terrorist activity and that while Hamas may not yet be carrying out terror attacks in Britain, instructions, money, or logistic support for Hamas terror acts elsewhere is being sent from Britain. This is now believed to be possible in light of the fact that Hamas has openly and officially boasted of its terrorist attacks and that detailed information on the links between Hamas members in Britain and the territories is now being made available.

Report Details Hamas Activity in Jordan

TA1704135494 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (24 SHA'OT supplement) in Hebrew 17 Apr 94 pp 1, 2

[Report by Roni Shaqed]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Hamas' overt and covert operations in Jordan are no secret, certainly not to Israeli intelligence. Israel has been familiar with this activity—including that of the military headquarters in Amman—since Hamas' establishment in December 1987. In Jordan, Hamas is enjoying the support and aid offered by its patron, the Muslim Brotherhood—which operates openly and legally in this country.

We must recall that in the first clause of its covenant, Hamas defines itself as "one of the branches of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine. The Muslim Brotherhood is a worldwide movement and the largest Muslim movement in the modern era."

Late in 1988 Hamas opened operational branches in several Arab states: Iran, Sudan, Lebanon, Yemen, and Jordan. Muhammad Nazzal from Qalqilyah, one of the prominent Palestinian members in the Muslim Brotherhood—who moved to Jordan in the early 1980's—was appointed Hamas' official representative in Jordan late in 1988. He received the special status also accorded to the PLO representative in Amman. His official office turned into a headquarters for all intents and purposes.

The overt activity of the Jordanian office was mainly directed at recruiting to Hamas Palestinians living in Jordan, as well as funneling funds to the territories. The office did not settle for this activity, however, and during 1990 there were several infiltration attempts by Hamas terrorists into the Jordan Valley. All this activity took place under the direction of the Amman office.

The Hamas office in Jordan also included a branch of the military command, which recruited and operated terror squads, especially in the West Bank. Some of 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam's most senior terrorists, including the two commanders in Samaria—'Abd-al-Karim Hanini and Zuhayr Jubran—were operated by the Jordan headquarters.

The car bombs which exploded in Mehola and Ramat Ef'al, and the plans to activate car bombs in the Hasharon junction, near a large Jerusalem department store, and Tel Aviv's Defense Ministry complex, were all initiated and planned by the Hamas headquarters in Jordan. Jubran was the man who operated the squad whose members murdered Nisim Toledano and policemen Dani Hazut and Mordekhay Yisra'el.

Since late 1988 the Jordan headquarters has been the seat of Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah, an East Jerusalem engineer who moved to Jordan after the Six-Day War. Since then the office has turned into Hamas' information, public relations, and propaganda center. Over the last year Hamas' leaflets and directions to the Palestinian public in the territories have been disseminated from his office. Official Hamas statements—including those of a military nature—also emanate from Jordan.

Until the end of 1992 the international Hamas headquarters—including the military command—operated from Washington and London. These locations were the source of operational directives to 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam's murder squads. Through fax machines and telephone calls directives were also conveyed to other Hamas apparatus. The Jordan headquarters was only a subordinate transit station for relaying directives onward.

Following the detention of two senior American Hamas activists—Muhammad Jarrad and Muhammad Salah—in Israel in January 1993, and due to the uncovering of fundamentalist Muslim terrorism in the United States, Hamas' main military command was transferred from London and Washington to Yemen and Jordan.

Muhammad Khazim Sawalihah, Hamas' military commander, at present operates from Jordan. He is being aided by several Hamas deportees who preferred not to return to the territories. Among them is Dr. Musa al-Aqtam, who was a senior lecturer in Nabulus' al-Najah University and a senior Hamas commander in the territories. Hamas terrorists caught by the Shin Bet during the last year divulged in the interrogations that they received their orders, funds, and operational directives from the Jordanian headquarters.

Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of Hamas international, passes his time both in Damascus and Amman. Most of his time is spent on furthering the military operations and other covert Hamas operations in the territories.

The Jordanian headquarters also handles Hamas' financial operations. Contributions from all over the Arab world reach Jordan, and from there—via money changers—to Hamas activists in the territories. The funds serve to buy weapons, pay rent for hiding places for fugitives, and finance their activities.

The Jordanian headquarters transfers huge amounts of funds to all the Hamas-controlled civilian institutions on a monthly basis. These institutions, such as education and medical institutions, trade unions, and sport clubs, serve as a legal cover for Hamas activity in the territories and a pool for recruiting activists and terrorists.

As will be recalled, Hamas pledged to carry out five attacks in retaliation to the Hebron massacre. Two have already been carried out. Jerusalem hopes that the uncovering of the links between the Jordanian headquarters and the attacks, and pressure exerted on King Husayn will hamper the activities of the Jordanian headquarters and indirectly contribute toward decreasing Hamas terrorism in the territories and in Israel.

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 17 April, in a page 1 and 2 report by Hemi Shalev and Shefi Gabay on Hamas activity in Jordan, adds that "Israel has relayed to Jordan intelligence information regarding Hamas activity in Amman and inside Israel."]

Rabin: Choice for Jordan Between U.S., Hamas

TA1504190794 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Excerpts] The United States has warned Jordan that unless Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] stops operating from its soil, Jordan will join the list of terror-supporting countries.

So far Amman has not formally reacted to the warning issued yesterday by Prime Minister Rabin, but Jerusalem is convinced that Husayn will take steps against Hamas. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen has more:

[Begin recording] [Rosen] [passage omitted] The news conference held by Rabin and Peres close to midnight last night was deliberately dramatic. Jerusalem believes that such a public onslaught will deal King Husayn a hard blow and force him to take action. The decision to act publicly, which Rabin made yesterday afternoon, was preceded by a series of secret messages. Elyaqim Rubinstein spoke with Jordanian Ambassador in Washington Fayiz al-Tarawinah. Senior U.S. elements also spoke with Amman. Jordan has not yet reacted officially. Unofficial elements said today: There is not much we can do.

Rabin says Jordan is running the risk of being placed on the U.S. list of terror-supporting countries; the Jordanians must choose between good relations with Washington and good relations with Hamas.

[Rabin] Not only does the Israeli Government take a grave view of this, but it will be unable to continue as if nothing has happened if this situation continues.

[Rosen] A military operation? asked journalists. No comment, replied Rabin. It is safe to assume that he was not referring to that. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew at 1730 GMT on 15 April carries an announcer-read report adding that "Israel refuses to accept the Jordanian reaction conveyed by a senior official, rejecting the prime minister's warning with regard to Hamas. Israeli political elements said that Jordan will be given some more time so that it can be determined whether the Jordanians are genuinely curbing the freedom of movement of the Hamas office in Amman."]

Rabin Said Consulting IDF Aides on Golan Withdrawal

TA1604173394 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] The prime minister has launched a series of consultations with senior IDF [Israel Defense Forces] elements, including the chief of staff and the Intelligence Branch chief, as to Israel's consent to withdraw on the Golan Heights. Intelligence Branch Chief Uri Sagi has made two trips to Washington recently, and one of his visits has been kept secret until now.

The meetings are part of the drafting of a working paper entitled The Israel-Syria Peace Package, and it outlines the Israeli stands on an agreement with Syria.

Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen reports that the proposal will be submitted to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who is slated to arrive in the region in about 10 days.

Likud elements asserted that by proposing to withdraw from the Golan while al-Asad-inspired katyushas are being launched at the Galilee, Rabin is behaving with obduracy.

Rabin Interviewed on Peace Process, Egypt's Efforts

NC1704061694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2220 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 16 Apr (MENA)—Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has praised the efforts that President Husni Mubarak and the Egyptian Government are exerting calmly and away from the media spotlight to help the PLO and Israel reach agreement over establishing peace in the region.

In an interview with the newspaper AL-AHRAM to be published in its 17 April issue, Rabin said that in a telephone conversation following the Israeli bus blast, he and Palestinian Chairman Yasir 'Arafat agreed on the need to continue the peace process, because it is the best response to the enemies of peace by the Israeli and the Palestinian sides.

The Israeli prime minister affirmed that the objective of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to the region at the end of this month is to boost the multilateral talks and to attend the signing of the agreement on implementing the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, if they reach agreement.

Rabin clarified that the peace efforts with the Palestinians must proceed simultaneously along two parallel roads, concentrating on the negotiations to reach agreement on implementing the Gaza-Jericho First agreement and to confirm that violence and terrorism will not hamper the negotiating process or attempts to reach agreement to implement the Declaration of Principles.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said in his interview with AL-AHRAM that agreement was reached between the Palestinian and the Israeli sides in a meeting in Cairo recently that anything that is agreed upon during the talks will be written down and initialed.

He pointed out that what Israel is trying to do with the Palestinians is to find a formula for peaceful coexistence without any clear or dividing lines, because there are no dividing lines in reality. In this context, he mentioned the corridor linking Gaza and Jericho.

Rabin said he would head for Moscow on April 24 to meet Russian President Boris Yeltsin. This visit will be preceded by another visit by Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat to Moscow. But Rabin ruled out the possibility of a meeting between him and 'Arafat then.

Rabin said that Israel tried to start secret talks with Syria but that Damascus refused to cooperate, despite the fact that none of the agreements between the Arabs and Israel since 1977 could have taken place had they not been preceded by secret talks.

Answering a question on relations between Israel and the Arab countries, Rabin said that peace between Egypt and Israel broke the hostility between Israel and the Arab countries. He stated: Undoubtedly, Egypt is the biggest and most important Arab country. Peace with Egypt has proven that peace can be established and preserved.

On the siege imposed on Gaza and the West Bank towns, the Israeli prime minister denied that there are any instructions banning the entry of food and medicine to the Gaza Strip. He said he agreed to exclude doctors, nurses, and Palestinian employees of international organizations from the ban on entering and leaving the occupied territories.

Rabin Interviewed on Settlement Policy

TA1504143294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1505 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by Karmit Gay, Sheli Yehimovich, and Shlomo Raz on 13 April; place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Yehimovich] The Jewish settlers were once favored by the government, even when your party was in power before. Now they have been somehow pushed into a corner. Naturally, they are not all made of one skin. They are not all Barukh Goldstein. Many of them have a different world view. Do you intend at any stage to resume a dialogue with them, to hold a closer and more frequent dialogue with them?

[Rabin] In a democratic state, it is legitimate to support or oppose the government policies. Staging legal demonstrations is legitimate. It is not legitimate to make threats or issue warnings about use of force. It is certainly not legitimate to issue halakic decrees urging soldiers to disobey orders. To me, this is most grave. It is inconceivable to call on soldiers of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]—which, as the military, is subject to the democratically and legally elected government which issues legitimate orders—to disobey an order. Had we accepted the principle that anyone may decide for himself what is right and what is not—whether he is a rabbi or a public figure—hundreds and thousands of soldiers would have refused to serve in Lebanon and hundreds, if not thousands, would have refused to serve in the territories.

I believe the Jewish nation has a right to settle in Eretz Yisra'el, but according to a concept. When I was prime minister between 1974 and 1977, I prevented the establishment of a Jewish quarter in Hebron. I believed it to be a mistake. This is what Qiryat Arba' is for. I opposed setting up Jewish settlements in areas densely populated by Palestinians. I agreed to the establishment of settlements in the 'Etzyon Bloc, in Qiryat Arba', in the Jordan Rift Valley, and on the outskirts of Netanya, such as Alfe Menashe and Elqana. I never wanted settlement in the heart of the Palestinian population in Judaea and Samaria, between Ramallah and Nabulus.

Jewish history mentions Nabulus but, for example, Ashqelon, Qiryat Gat, and Ashdod are situated on historical Philistine land. Today, they are rightfully part of the State of Israel. I do not suggest that we view the Bible as the book of maps of the Jewish state. To me, the Bible is the book of religion, real values, real codes, tradition, and the history of the Jewish nation. This is how I studied it, and not as the book of the precise maps of the Jewish state. [passage omitted]

[Raz] Does the way the settlements are spread out not make it very difficult for the current government to make decisions regarding the future of the West Bank?

[Rabin] This is the reason we chose the path we did. The path started at Camp David, with the idea of autonomy for the Palestinians, and continued in the negotiations at the Madrid conference, where the word autonomy was erased, not by us, but by the Arab side at the very beginning of the negotiations that led to the convention of the Madrid Conference. The word autonomy does not feature in any of the papers that accompanied the letter of invitation to the Madrid Conference. The word autonomy does not appear in any paper presented by Israeli Governments—and I stress governments in the plural—during the negotiating process. It was replaced by Self-Government Arrangements for the Palestinians. This is what we are dealing with.

I believe our approach is correct. I know there is a serious problem. We must change the reality on the ground before we approach the issue of the permanent solution. I believe that the reality of settlements located in areas densely populated by the Palestinians—and I am not referring to Greater Jerusalem, the 'Etzyon Bloc, or the Jordan Rift Valley—the reality in which settlements are spread out among such a dense population does place a burden on the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], which must provide them with security. If I take the size of the force currently situated in Hebron.... [pauses] This is no simple matter. Nonetheless, it is our duty to defend all the Jewish settlements. This is also in accordance with the Declaration of Principles for the interim period. We have reached an agreement with the PLO that the Jewish settlements will remain in place, and we....

[Gay, interrupting] But there is a settlement in the heart of Hebron which you personally said is a mistake....

[Rabin, interrupting] I opposed it, but now it exists. I have said this before, and I am willing to repeat: Given a militarily strong Israel, I would not want to remove a settlement for security reasons, but I am willing to remove settlements for peace. There is a precedent. In order to achieve peace with Egypt, we not only returned everything we had conquered from Egypt in the Six-Day War, down to the very last inch of sovereign Egyptian soil, but we also uprooted every sign of Israeli presence in the Sinai: the entire area of the Rafah enclave, Yamit, Ofira, and so on. The precedent of the price of peace was determined, to a large extent, when we made peace with Egypt. We hope to change it. Again, given our military might and even if the price is a painful one, I say yes to evacuating settlements for peace and no to evacuating for security reasons. [passage omitted]

Peres To Meet 'Arafat in Bucharest 21 Apr

TA1704175294 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] The United States is pressuring Israel and the PLO to sign a Gaza-Jericho withdrawal agreement this month so that the signing ceremony can take place during the secretary of state's visit to the region in late April.

Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik reports that Shim'on Peres and Yasir 'Arafat will meet several times at a conference in Bucharest on Thursday and Friday so as to speed up the negotiations. Peres will probably also meet Jordanian Prime Minister al-Majali there, and there are currently contacts to work that out.

The United States is demanding that Israel and Syria prepare a package of their demands on security, peace, and a Golan withdrawal prior to Secretary Christopher's visit. Due to that, deliberations are taking place in Rabin's and Peres' bureaus on various position papers. It is unclear whether the Syrians are working on their own proposals.

Peres on Negotiations With Palestinians, Syrians

NC1504213194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2040 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 15 Apr (MENA)—Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has stated that withdrawal from the Gaza Strip can be completed within three or four days after the final agreement with the Palestinians is signed.

In a statement to AL-AHRAM to be published tomorrow, Peres said that Israel has actually completed the withdrawal of the major part of its equipment and men from the Strip, and only the necessary forces to guard the Israeli camps there have remained.

The Israeli foreign minister added that he will meet with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat next Friday [22 April] in Bucharest, noting that if tangible progress is made during this meeting, he will leave with 'Arafat immediately for Cairo.

Peres said that Israel is prepared to respond to President Husni Mubarak's call from Cairo following his meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad for reciprocal concessions by Israel and Syria. The Israeli foreign minister said that Israel is ready to return the Golan to Syria, but this will depend on the nature of peace, which Damascus wants. He noted that Syria still refuses to hold direct, secret talks with Israel.

Peres denied reports about Israel's intention to dominate the Middle East economically. He said that Egypt received Israeli assistance in the agricultural field, and within a few years it was able to compete with Israel in exporting its agricultural produce to the countries to which Israel used to export its own agricultural produce.

Regarding Israeli pressure on the Palestinians to make concessions, Peres said that Israel is the one that is making concessions and not the Palestinians. He said that all those who carried out stabbings against Israelis came from Gaza.

The Israeli foreign minister said that agreement has actually been reached regarding the Palestinian force that will operate in Gaza, and that the date for the deployment of the first group will be decided by the Palestinian authority. This may take place at any time after the signing of the agreement. The remainder of the force can enter after the signing of the final agreement, which might be ready by the end of this month.

Peres said that it was also agreed with the Palestinians that 'Arafat and senior officials of his administration can use helicopters to move between Gaza and Jericho. Agreement is also being worked out on a number of matters such as identity cards for the Palestinian citizens, postage stamps, and so forth.

'Peace Package' Offer to Syria Detailed

TA1704080994 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Apr 94 pp A1, A10

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[Excerpts] On 15 April, Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister and defense minister, received a draft offer for a "peace package" with Syria, to be given to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in order that he relay it to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

Staff work on the formulation of the "peace package" with Syria was conducted by Major General Ilan Biran on behalf of Rabin. Biran, who over the past several months had no IDF [Israel Defense Forces] assignment, will assume duty as commander of Central Command today. Professor Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States and head of Israel's delegation for negotiations with Syria, also participated in drafting the document. Parallel with the work on the "peace package" for the Syrians, the IDF has begun preparing a list of security demands Israel will present to the United States to compensate for the peace risks.

The "peace package" with Syria presents the principles of the offered arrangement, and does not detail the depth of withdrawal and the time needed for its implementation. Israel will suggest to Syria that the details be worked out in direct discussions on the expert level.

The "peace package" with Syria is made of four basic elements: withdrawal from the Golan, peace relations, security arrangements, and a timetable for the implementation of the withdrawal and the normalization. Among other things, the Israeli offer to the Syrians will include the following points:

—A commitment in principle to withdraw. The offer does notcontain a pledge to fully withdraw from the Golan Heights.
—Full peace relations, including embassies, open borders, andeconomic ties.
—A gradual implementation of the withdrawal over years.
—Establishing normalization and relations between Israel andSyria right after the first stage of withdrawal, while the IDFstill holds a significant part of the Golan Heights.
—A future discussion of water resources on the Golan.
—Security arrangements that will include demilitarizing zones, force reductions, warning stations; and the deployment of an international force to supervise the implementation of the arrangement.

The security arrangements will be reciprocal, but not symmetrical: Syria will be asked to demilitarize a larger territory than Israel.

Senior political sources yesterday said that the United States does not demand that Israel currently detail its stands beyond a general description of principles because Israel is way ahead of Syria in presenting its stands. Syria has not yet drafted a similar offer.

The presentation of the basic components of the "peace package" was at the center of Rabin's meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington last month. Israel pledged to present the package to Secretary of State Christopher so that he relay it to the Syrians during his upcoming visit in the region. According to reports received in Israel recently, al-Asad is expecting the Israeli offer from Christopher.

Parallel with the arrangement with Syria, Israel will demand that the United States bolster Israeli security, and assist in implementing and guarding the arrangement. Rabin discussed the issue with the heads of the U.S. Administration, and the issue was also broached in meetings Ambassador Rabinovich held with U.S. officials, but it has not yet been raised in contacts between the Israeli defense establishment and the Pentagon. Rabin will discuss the security demands with Christopher.

Israel will not ask that military aid be expanded, only that its current level of $1.8 billion annually be maintained, as Clinton promised. Among the ideas raised in internal discussions were the placement of large amounts of U.S. arms and ammunition in Israel ahead of time; expanding the use by the 6th Fleet of the Haifa port; a deployment of armed U.S. Navy vessels along the Israeli coast to serve as the launching pad for intervention forces in the Balkans, the Persian Gulf, and Africa; expanding Israeli access to U.S. warning systems and sophisticated armament. Israel will also demand that strategic and political coordination with Washington be tightened. [passage omitted]

The offer for an arrangement with Syria recently drafted by the Foreign Ministry, which includes a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights as its working assumption, was prepared without any connection to the staff work prepared upon the request of the prime minister. [passage omitted]

Update on Contacts With Syria, Jordan

TA1704065194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin says that without secret talks with Syria, a peace agreement cannot be reached. In an interview with the Cairo newspaper AL-AHRAM, Rabin says Israel had tried to arrange secret meetings with Syrian leaders, but they had refused. In the interview, Rabin accused Syria of talking peace, while simultaneously supporting Palestinian organizations opposed to negotiations.

Major General Ilan Biran, who today takes over as the head of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Central Command, has presented Prime Minister Rabin with a working paper on security arrangements on the Golan. Biran discussed the issue with the prime minister and with Chief of Staff Baraq on Friday and on a previous occasion. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 17 April reports: "Israel has expressed its displeasure over the harsh criticism Syria had leveled at Oman for its willingness to host an Israeli delegation. Our correspondent in Washington Arye Golan reports that Professor Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States, spoke to U.S. coordinator Dennis Ross on the matter, and told him that the Syrian remarks do not contribute to the establishment of a proper atmosphere in view of the upcoming Middle East tour by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and toward the resumption of the peace talks."]

The Prime Minister's office in Jerusalem says there were contacts involving Syria, after katyusha rockets landed in Israel, during the early hours of Friday morning. Jerusalem says those contacts brought quiet to the Israeli side of the border over the Sabbath, even if katyushas did land in southern Lebanon.

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 17 April carries a report by Ron Ben-Yishay on pages 1 and 15, adding: "Over the weekend, the Israeli Government relayed a warning to Hizballah and Syria that if murderous attacks on the SLA [South Lebanese Army] and Lebanese civilians in the security zone continue, the IDF will feel free to ignore the understandings made after Operation Accountability last summer." The report adds that "there is growing concern among Israel's top security echelons that the SLA might gradually disintegrate, physically and morally, and that the security zone in south Lebanon might crumble."]

Also at the Prime Minister's Office, there is expectation for more progress with the PLO on Gaza-Jericho first, as the Israelis prepare for the resumption of those talks today. If the Palestinians raise the issue of the closure of the territories imposed a week and a half ago, an official in Jerusalem said last night they will be told that the possibility of lifting restrictions has been and will continue to be checked on a constant basis, including at this morning's cabinet meeting.

There is no reaction in Jerusalem to King Husayn's news conference on Hamas. Prime Minister Rabin's media adviser 'Oded Ben-'Ami says Israel will know whether in fact Jordan has acted against Hamas operations in the country, based on whether or not we hear from the Hamas people in Jordan again. For now, says Ben-'Ami, we have said what we wanted to say.

Plan Envisions Full Withdrawal From Golan

TA1804083194 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 18 Apr 94 pp A1, A8

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben and 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpts] In the past few weeks, a state body subject to the Prime Minister's Office presented Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin with a plan for a peace arrangement with Syria. The paper was drafted in parallel with similar work done by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the Foreign Ministry.

The plan, drafted at the initiative of that body's research department, assumes that, in the framework of the agreement, there will be a total Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights and that the negotiations with Syria will focus on security arrangements and stages of normalization and withdrawal.

The authors of the document propose a staged withdrawal over a period of more than 10 years, during which the IDF will maintain its military presence on the Golan. They believe that future peace relations between Israel and Syria will be similar to those existing between Israel and Egypt—perhaps even cooler.

The team that drafted the document on the arrangement with Syria prepared a proposal four months ago on an arrangement with the Palestinians. That paper determined that the preferable solution for Israel is the establishment of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation.

Of the three staff works prepared in anticipation of the resumption of the negotiations with Syria, only the one prepared by Major General Ilan Biran was done by order of the prime minister and followed his guidance regarding the principles of the arrangement. Biran's paper speaks of a withdrawal on the Golan Heights, but not a full one. The Foreign Ministry and the state body, which assumed that a full withdrawal will be carried out, based their work on their own assumptions. [passage omitted]

As U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the Middle East approaches, Israeli sources in Washington have reported that Israel will not relay detailed plans on peace arrangements and a withdrawal to Syria through the United States. The prime minister will again ask the secretary of state to propose to Syria to begin a practical discussion of the security arrangements, but it is not clear whether al-Asad will accept this proposal and waive his demand that Israel pledge a full withdrawal in advance.

Government Categorically Rejects Israeli 'Threats'

Council Issues Statement

JN1604150494 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] In its session today, the Council of Ministers issued a statement on remarks directed against Jordan by Israeli officials. Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of information and minister of state for cabinet affairs, made a statement whose text reads as follows:

The Jordanian Government has followed the serious and sudden stepping up of statements by Israeli officials, particularly the Israeli prime minister and the foreign minister, against Jordan and its government in light of the increasing acts of violence in the occupied Arab territories and in Israel and the intentional escalation in the official Israeli media in the wake of these statements, including the issuance of warnings and threats to Jordan that military action would be taken against its security and sovereignty.

The Jordanian Government views these sudden statements with surprise and disapprobation. These statements point an accusing finger at Jordan under the pretext that it allowed a Hamas spokesman to make statements from Jordan on the 'Afula and Hadera operations.

This method, which has become more frequent than at any time in the past, is nothing but an abortive attempt which demonstrates the Israeli Government's inability to distribute its responsibilities for dealing with the aggravating conditions. It is an Israeli Government attempt to brand Jordan with terrorism, tarnish its reputation, and undermine its sincere desire and effective efforts to realize just, permanent, and comprehensive peace in the region.

Jordan has endeavored on all levels to warn against the dangers of violence that results from the continuation of the Israeli occupation of Arab territories and the consequences of its practices, represented by collective punishment of the residents of the occupied territories and by daily curfews and killings, something which escalates the circle of violence and counterviolence, in addition to Israel's faltering stands in the peace process, its attempts to evade substantive issues, its practice of inventing excuses and indulging in detail, and its denial of rights.

Needless to say, Jordan has no need to defend itself or its record of not approving the option of violence or terrorism. Neither does Jordan need anyone to remind it of terror's consequential killing of innocents and civilians and disruption of the peace process. Jordan has suffered much from terror and paid a heavy price in blood and resources. Jordan has not and never will let its territory be used as a springboard or passageway for violence or planning it, proceeding from a principled stand reflecting a concern for the lives of innocents, human rights, democracy, and the peace process.

The Jordanian government has noticed that the Israeli prime minister said that the Jordanian television showed an interview with a spokesman for Hamas. No such interview was broadcast by the Jordanian television—neither after the 'Afula attack nor after the Hadera attack. Indeed, it was the Israeli television newscasts that featured such interviews.

While emphasizing its concern for and commitment to the peace process and its call for promoting the intensive and continuous endeavors to realize the cherished peace, the Jordanian government categorically rejects methods of intimidation and of threats to use force. Based on its position which calls for peace and as a worker for the realization of peace, for stability in the region, and for an end to the conflict in it, Jordan will not submit to methods of pressure, coercion, or intimidation. Jordan calls for pooling all efforts and supports all calls that have been issued for accelerating the peace process and finding solutions for substantive issues. This will extricate the region from the circle of violence and realize peace, security, and stability for its peoples.

Having always abided by, respected, and implemented unanimous Arab decisions; and out of its respect for the will of the Palestinian people in their free choice of the PLO as their sole, legitimate representative, Jordan reaffirms that it deals with the PLO in its capacity as the sole party authorized to negotiate on behalf of the Palestinian people and undertake its responsibilities on Palestinian territory.

Jordan shall continue to deal with the PLO on this basis and shall not allow Jordanian territory to give prominence to any organizations contrary to this reality or influencing this reality and weakening the PLO's ability to achieve the ambitions and aspirations of the Palestinian people on Palestinian soil.

King Holds News Conference

JN1604172294 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1600 GMT 16 Apr 94

[News conference by King Husayn with unidentified reporters in Amman on 16 April—recorded]

[Text] [Husayn] I would like to say that from the outset we had the feeling that the peace process to which we have always committed ourselves toward the establishment of a just, durable peace for future generations to enjoy and cherish and protect, because it is hopefully going to be a just peace and, therefore, a durable one—we realized from the outset that it was going to take time and efforts and patience. But even by my standards I believe that a lot of time has passed, and that it has been wasted, and that the approach to peace has not been characterized by the required determination by all parties to the conflict, and all involved in trying to get it to achieve its objectives are sponsoring these efforts; that all this has with the passage of time caused a psychological setback so that the overwhelming majority of people in this region who showed great optimism and enthusiasm for peace have had their hopes dampened with the passage of time.

As far as I am concerned, it is a time for all to reassess and to move deliberately and seriously to achieve the desired results. No more time can be wasted. As for violence, we abhor and condemn it wherever it occurs. This is the history of Jordan, which has suffered as a result of violence and which has stood time and again squarely in the face of violence as it affected innocent people anywhere in the world. This does not change or waver. But violence in the recent times is most disturbing and distressing and the zenith of violence was the tragedy that occurred in Hebron on a Friday morning and in the mosque. Beyond that, there have been actions and reactions and our hearts go out to the victims and to the families of the victims, wherever they be and whoever they are.

But in regard to that dimension as well, I feel that the Government of Israel should admit, or have the courage to admit, that it has, and it bears, a responsibility in terms of violence that has been growing in the occupied territories and in the region.

On the other hand, I feel very, very strongly that the unfortunate target of the Hebron massacre or any other act that has followed is the peace process, is the hope for a different region were people can live under conditions which had been denied us over a very, very long period of time, in fact, which we haven't known throughout our lives. If this is the case, then something has to be done about it, and there has to be the realization that such acts are carried out to drive us away from the goal of attaining and achieving a just, honorable, durable peace in the region.

On an internal Jordanian matter—before the prime minister of Israel and the foreign minister of Israel made their statements—we, on the highest level of authority in this country, have been looking at developments in the region and had decided to reemphasize our unwavering position adopted after deep discussion at the Rabat summit in 1974 recognizing and nominating the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the people of Palestine in response to a Palestinian wish and Arab wish, with which we agreed. And ever since then we have tried to our utmost to realize this position in terms in every action that we have taken, including providing the umbrella for the joint delegation, in other words, the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, to go to Madrid, the Palestinians being the representatives of the Palestinian people regarding their rights on their legitimate soil—and despite the surprise of Oslo we had to adhere, as we always do to our policy and perspective, and we emphasize the need to support the PLO. And, more concretely, we ratified the Jordanian-Israeli agenda following the ratification of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement in Washington in support of the Palestinians and their right to act in terms of the interests of the Palestinian people on Palestinian soil, and to move to resolve our own problems. So, this is the background.

As far as we are concerned on this land, the territories of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, we do not recognize or accept to cooperate with anybody representing or professing to represent our Palestinian brethren except the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the people of Palestine, through its recognized organs and representatives here in Jordan. Any other group is illegal in terms of any actions it takes or position it feels or claims to represent. And I call upon all Jordanians to realize this fact, and to adhere to this consistent policy that has been that of the government and the kingdom over so many years.

[Unidentified reporter] What is the legal status of the Hamas presence in Jordan, and are you planning to take any action against them to ensure that the PLO remains the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians?

[Husayn] There is no legal status.

[Reporter] I mean [Hamas leaders] Mr. Nazzal and Mr. Ghawshah...

[Husayn,interrupting] I think that if they chose to behave as Jordanians, then that's fine, they will be amongst the other Jordanians, members of this family. If they choose otherwise, then they will have to answer for that, but there is no legal status.

[Reporter] Your Majesty, it was the first time that since the beginning of the peace process that Jordan links its continuation of its participation in the peace process to a condition, which is in this case the lifting of the blockade of al-'Aqabah. Now, can we deduce from here that in view of these pressures it is becoming, and due to the declining enthusiasms for the peace process, Jordan feels that the price of continuing the peace process—in view of these pressures—is becoming too high, and that Jordan at one point, due to public opinion pressure, or due to economic pressure, reconsider its role in the peace process, or its participation to begin with?

[Husayn] Nothing could be further from the truth. I think others should review their positions regarding the peace process. Jordan has not backed away, nor has Jordan showed any reluctance to serious dialogue and negotiations towards achieving the resolution of all our standing problems as outlined in the Jordanian-Israeli agenda leading to the desired peace and peace treaty as a crowning achievement of resolving these problems. We have been ready. We don't see anybody responding to that yet.

So we hope that not only on this track but on every track we will see movement so that the final result is a comprehensive peace that we all seek for this entire region.

Regarding al-'Aqabah, we feel that there was a deliberate policy to pick out Jordan from all the neighbors of Iraq following the tragedy of the Gulf and to treat it in a manner that is unacceptable. We've tried to correct this by every means possible over the years, but things have reached the point where we would like to know what is this policy and what is its objective and who is behind this policy. Is it the Security Council? Is it one single nation? Is it the coalition of countries of the Gulf war? We find it deeply humiliating and we find that one of the obvious objectives is to tarnish the credibility of Jordan. We accepted Security Council resolutions as they affect Iraq and we implemented them and we are implementing them. But the integrity and credibility of this country is something that we can't bargain over.

And in fact these recent accusations of Jordan and Jordan's involvement with terror, contrary to everything else known about this country, may unfortunately, whether intentionally or otherwise, fall in the same stream.

Regarding the Gulf crisis, our position was honorable and was one of concern regarding all in this region, and then eagerness to try to resolve the terrible mistake by Arab means and within the context of the Arab family. Unfortunately, we were unable to do nothing that would have brought us close to our targets, we were unable to succeed with either side in terms of the powers that stood facing each other until the disaster occurred. We are unhappy about the conditions of the people of Iraq. We are really concerned with them. As far as the policies of the government and the leadership of Iraq, we have nothing to do with their policies and unfortunately the last time I was able to discuss policies with the leadership in Iraq was the time I visited Baghdad before the war, and I came back brokenhearted because I met failure there, as I had met it with the coalition and with the other parties to the terrible tragedy that has occurred there.

We have accepted the Security Council resolutions. We have implemented them. We are implementing them to the best of our ability. So what is the sense of continuing this situation as far as al-'Aqabah is concerned? We would like to know what is happening and we would like to have assurances that we are close to the end of this situation before we are able to determine exactly where we go from here. But as far as the peace process is concerned, we are very interested in it. In fact, we did more to get it to move in the first place than any. And here, I'd like to point out that we did not go as a government alone. We had, to the best of our ability, a debate in this country through a meeting that was attended by all elected bodies in this country and representative bodies looked at our options and decided to go. We did not go there because of any pressure. We do not succumb to pressure, from any quarter. We go... [pauses] whatever we do in this world, driven by our conscience and our sense of responsibility towards our people and the people in this region and the future of all.

Ministry Reportedly Told To Limit Hamas Activity

JN1704114694 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 17 Apr 94 pp 1, 5

[Report by JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Nirmin Murad]

[Excerpts] Amman—His Majesty King Husayn said Saturday [16 April] that Jordan only recognises the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and as such will not allow any other Palestinian group to operate from Jordanian territory.

The King said the government had decided that the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, had been operating illegally in Jordan before Israeli Prime Minister Yizhaq Rabin discussed the issue in remarks he made Thursday. [passage omitted]

A senior Jordanian official who asked to remain anonymous said the issue had been under discussion in the Cabinet since Hamas representative in Amman Muhammad Nazzal claimed his group's responsibility for the bus bomb attack in Hadera and had already issued instructions to the interior Ministry to limit Hamas operations in the Kingdom.

"The minister of interior had instructions to call the two Hamas representtives and inform them that they were operating here illegally before Rabin made his statements to the press Thursday evening," the official told the Jordan Times. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim welcomed the King's reaffirmation that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in Jordan and elsewhere.

Senate Supports King's Position on Israeli Charges

JN1704141794 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] In its meeting held today under Senate President Ahmad al-Lawzi, the Senate issued a statement expressing support for His Majesty King Husayn's statements to the local and foreign media.

The Senate's statement said his majesty has reiterated the constants of the firm Jordanian policy toward the Palestine question and the issues and problems resulting from it.

The Senate expressed full support for the Jordanian position, which was expressed by his majesty when he clearly explained Jordan's sincere intentions toward a just peace that realizes the national ambitions of the Palestinian people on their soil and liberates the occupied Arab territories in harmony with international legitimacy and human rights.

The Senate emphasized that Jordan has always stood against terrorism and has paid a dear price with the blood of its sons while firmly confronting terrorism. Jordan has always been eager to reject violence in politics. This position is manifested in Jordan's long history of working for the cause of just peace.

The Senate also stressed that Jordan strongly rejects any charges that it is soft on, or encourages terrorism. It considers that these false charges are made to justify the aggressive pressure being placed on the country, including the unjust siege on the Port of al-'Aqabah, in a bid to force it to change its pan-Arab constructive position on just and lasting peace.

Al-Majali on Israeli 'Threats', PLO Ties

JN1804091394 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 18 Apr 94 pp 1, 5

[Text] Amman (Petra)—Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali on Sunday [17 April] reaffirmed Jordan's rejection of any unilateral solution to the Middle East conflict saying that Jordan was seeking just, comprehensive and durable peace acceptable by all Arab parties concerned.

Speaking during a meeting with representatives of publications of political parties, Dr. al-Majali said Jordan had been subjected to pressure in a bid to force it to change its principled stand towards Arab issues.

Dr. al-Majali rejected Israel's attempts to link Jordan with terrorism and said there could be a linkage between the threats and Israel's attempts to export its internal crises to Jordan.

Dr. al-Majali said the siege of al-'Aqabah was part of the Gulf war and that Jordan had been suffering for more than three years from the blockade.

He said the siege had so far cost Jordan more than $1.2 billion.

The prime minister said the government was exerting efforts with France, Britain and others to explain the dangers posed by the situation.

He added that Jordan made intensive contacts with the U.S. administration and the United Nations Sanctions Committee to stop the interception of ships heading for al-'Aqabah. He expressed hope that a solution be reached to this problem soon.

Dr. al-Majali said Lloyds Register had made an offer to Jordan to help end the search of ships in the high seas. Lloyds is a non-political and non-profit international corporation whose presence will not have any effect on Jordan's national sovereignty,“ he said.

Inter-Arab coordination, Dr. al-Majali said, falls short of aspirations. "It is regrettable indeed that current events and crises facing the Arab nation have not made them more tolerant or more cohesive, particularly at a time when we realise that Arab negotiators can achieve more when they are united," the prime minister said.

On Jordanian-Palestinian relations, Dr. al-Majali said Jordan maintains unique and special relations with the Palestinian people. However, he said, there are several Palestinian factions with different political affiliations.

Dr. al-Majali said it was natural for Jordan to establish relations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the Palestinian entity recognised by the Palestinian people, the Arab Nation and most world countries.

The prime minister voiced Jordan's support for the PLO to help it regain full Palestinian rights.

"We pray to God that the political organisation enters the occupied Palestinian territories and that the Palestinian people restore their legitimate rights on their national soil," he said. "It is then the kind of relation between Jordan and the Palestinians will be determined."

On Jerusalem, Dr. al-Majali said while PLO officials had agreed to discuss the issue of Jerusalem in the second phase of talks, Jordan believed that Jerusalem is the major problem, given the current state of inter-Arab division. "There is no peace without Jerusalem," Dr. al-Majali said.

On recent incidents aimed at destablising security and stability in the country, Dr. al-Majali said perpetrators of these crimes were trained abroad to use arms.

'Authoritative' Source Decries Rabin's Remarks

JN1504175194 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1715 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Report by Randah Habib from Amman]

[Text] An authoritative Jordanian source has said his country does not believe there is any justification for Israel's accusations of Amman's alleged support for Hamas' activities on its territory. The source explained that the Hamas representatives are Jordanian nationals and enjoy freedom of speech. Consequently, their statements are within the framework of this freedom of speech. The source also explained that Hamas operations are planned and carried out by the leadership of this movement in the occupied territories and not by its political representatives in Jordan.

After mentioning that the activities of the Hamas representatives are confined to only the political dimension and do not violate regulations and laws, the source emphasized that compelling them to leave the Kingdom is in violation of the Constitution.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin had said that Israel cannot tolerate the Hamas Movement, the declared enemy of the peace process, enjoying a safe haven in Jordan.

'Senior' Official Reacts to Rabin's Hamas Remarks

JN1504191894 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] Jordan rejected Israeli accusations that the country was assisting the Islamic Hamas Movement, and said such accusations were rash and baseless.

A senior Jordanian official said Israel's accusations are not helping the peace process. He said Hamas attacks were planned inside the occupied Arab land.

Hamas claimed responsibility for two suicide attacks which killed 14 Israelis inside Israel over the past 10 days.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin called a news conference late last night and warned against what he called continued activities of Hamas in Jordan. Rabin and his Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said Israel will not tolerate the activities of Hamas.

Officials Reject Israeli Criticism Over Hamas

JN1604075694 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 16 Apr 94 p 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Nirmin Murad]

[Text] Amman—Jordanian officials on Friday [15 April] dismissed as "political propaganda" Israeli accusations that Jordan was helping the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), which has claimed responsibility for two suicide bomb attacks that killed 12 Israelis during the last 10 days and threatened to launch similar attacks in the future.

"According to our information, the attacks carried out by Hamas inside Israeli were conceived, planned and executed in the occupied territories," a senior government official said. "Thus the accusation that Jordan is helping Hamas is unsubstantiated hasty and does not contribute positively to the peace process," the official told the JORDAN TIMES.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin on Thursday accused Jordan of helping Hamas although he did not say how Jordan was extending that help.

"Israel cannot tolerate the situation of Amman being a paradise for the activities of the Hamas," Mr. Rabin said at a hastily called late-night news conference in Tel Aviv. "I see the need, I and the foreign minister together, to come and say to the Jordan government: This situation is intolerable."

Another Jordanian official, who also spoke on condition of anonymity, dismissed the Israeli accusations as politically motivated. "It is ridiculous to say that Jordan is helping Hamas in carrying out these attacks just because a Jordanian citizen comes out and says my group did it," the official said "what they (the Israelis) are trying to do is to look for scapegoats outside the occupied territories to blame them for their own frustration."

"Instead of doing that" the official continued, "Israel needs to look closer to home to see that acts of Palestinian violence are in direct response to acts of violence by Israelis against Palestinians. Violence can only breed violence, as the Israelis well know."

Jordanian officials generally believed that Muhammad Nazzal, the Hamas representative in Amman, who made the statements claiming responsibility for the attacks against Israelis in 'Afula and Khudayrah "is not himself responsible for the attacks and was only addressing journalists as a politician, which is not against the law."

There was no official response from the Cabinet whose spokesman said it was still deliberating the accusation and preparing a response.

But some officials privately expressed concern that such statements as those made by Mr. Nazzal in Amman were not compatible with the Kingdom's policy on the Middle East peace process and could put the country into a difficult position at a time when it is calling for linking the lifting of the siege on al-'Aqabah with its role in the process.

They said that the Hamas statements from Amman played into the hands of the Americans and Israel who wanted to pressure the Kingdom further after His Majesty King Husayn tied the Kingdom's role in the peace process with lifting the siege against al-'Aqabah.

"It is clear," a prominent Jordanian politician told the JORDAN TIMES, "that the U.S. and Israel want to tie the Hamas statements with Jordan's conditions on the peace process and the al-'Aqabah blockade."

"They were unhappy with the King's conditions regarding al-'Aqabah and this is how they found a counter issue to pressure the Kingdom," the politician said.

A senior official, who agreed with the politician, also said that Jordan also sees the anger expressed by the Israeli prime minister as another indication of attempts to undermine Jordan's role in the peace process.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who joined Mr. Rabin in his press conference Thursday, said he was especially angry that Mr. Nazzal had said that the two attacks were among five that Hamas would carry out to avenge the Hebron Mosque massacre of dozens of Palestinian worshipers.

"I don't know one incident in foreign affairs in which a state which says it is aspiring to peace would allow in light of day the head or representative of a murderous organisation to say: 'We committed two incidents of murder and we intend to carry out three more incidents like this, in the light of day,' on the television screen," Mr. Peres said.

Jordanian officials also believe that this is another link in the general antagonism many countries in the Arab region and the U.S. feel towards Jordan's democracy and inability of many of these countries to believe that Jordan cannot impose limits on the political statements of politicians like Mr. Nazzal, or force newspapers to take one side over the other.

"Since the Gulf war, the U.S. and Gulf states did not believe us when we said we could not control the media hailing Saddam Husayn or criticising Gulf states," a well-placed official said.

"Now when we tell them that we legally cannot take any action against Hamas issuing statements from here, they are also not going to believe us," the official added.

"Hamas represents an extremist point of view which echoes statements made by the extremists on the Israeli side calling for the extermination of all Palestinians," one official said adding, "I do not see how Israel in a democratic context can expect us to muffle the extremist voices on our side while letting free the extremist voices on their side."

Hamas representatives were not available for comment over this controversy, but one of them would only say that his group did not want to "make Jordan's position any more difficult than it already is."

However, prominent Islamist and Islamic Action Front (IAF) Deputy Hammam Sa'id said that Hamas in Jordan had better leave claims of responsibility to come from inside the occupied territories.

"All Hamas activities originate from inside the occupied territories and there is nothing coming from outside except political and media statements...decisions for Hamas are not taken from outside of the occupied territories in terms of military action," he said.

Mr. Sa'id, implicitly criticising Mr. Nazzal, said that "the approach should be of a different kind. People inside the occupied territories should be left to express themselves by themselves as they offer sacrifices and take their own decisions."

Minister Views 'Threats,' al-'Aqabah 'Siege'

JN1704105294 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 17 Apr 94 p 28

[By Amjad Mu'alla]

[Excerpts] Amman—Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, has asserted that Jordan will not yield to threats and pressures regardless of their form and source. Replying to the recent Israeli threats against Jordan, al-Hasan said: "We are astonished at the statements made by the Israeli prime minister, and assert that Jordan will not yield to threats and pressures."

In an open dialogue with the Arab Youths Forum held at the Amman Chamber of Industry yesterday afternoon, al-Hasan added that the Israeli threats were discussed at the highest levels over the past two days, and the Council of Ministers also discussed them in yesterday's session and followed up all statements made by the Israeli side. He said that Jordan is proud of its record of fighting all forms and sources of terrorism. We in Jordan have been victims of international terrorism, he noted.

Al-Hasan added: With regard to what was said about Hamas and other parties, Jordan's position is clear, which is that Jordan recognizes the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He said that Israel is responsible for what happened in Hebron, and that all that has happened recently in terms of escalated violence was a result of the Hebron massacre, in which 50 worshipers fell victim and more than 300 others were wounded.

Asked about Jordan's participation as an observer in the meetings of the Water and Refugees Committee which will begin in Oman today as part of the multilateral negotiations, as well as linking this participation to Jordan's suspension of participation in the peace process until the siege of al-'Aqabah is lifted, al-Hasan said: Our participation in these negotiations came in this way to prove the Jordanian credibility about commitment to the peace process. He added that this position was taken despite what we said about the siege of al-'Aqabah and despite what His Majesty King Husayn said to the ambassadors of the five permanent Security Council member states.

Al-Hasan asserted that we preferred not to boycott the negotiations but to reduce the level of representation in them and be content with an observer status in the Water Committee until something new develops with regard to the siege of al-'Aqabah.

Al-Hasan detailed the bases and principles of Jordan's foreign policy during this meeting which was organized by the Arab Youths Forum and attended by the Foreign Ministry's secretary general and several senior Foreign Ministry officials. The dialogue was moderated by 'Abdallah Kan'an, member of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Youths Forum. The meeting was also attended by many Forum members and heads of branches in various governorates of the Kingdom.

Al-Hasan said that in coordination with Arab states, Jordan is interested in and committed to the negotiations [with Israel] to arrive at a just, comprehensive solution to the Middle East crisis. He said that for the Hashemite leader, finding a solution to this crisis is a top priority. This is because, he noted, the holy city [Jerusalem] has a special status in the hearts of Arabs and Muslims. He stressed that no solution is considered fair and comprehensive unless Jerusalem is included.

He added that Jerusalem is one of the delayed issues, but Jordan has left no occasion without asserting that the city's Arab, Islamic identity must be restored.

Responding to a question on the Jordanian-Palestinian coordination, the minister said that Jordan is interested in serious, effective coordination with all concerned Arab parties, especially the Palestinians. He said that coordination must take place before and after any decision is made. He stressed Jordan's rejection of superficial coordination that is intended only to convey information.

He stressed that Jordan respects and supports the independent Palestinian decisionmaking by the PLO, in its capacity as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Responding to a question on Jordanian-U.S. contacts on the question of the Port of al-'Aqbah, al-Hasan said that contacts are continuing, but so far there is no U.S. response. [passage omitted]

He added: Jordan supported Iraq and its people when they defended the eastern flank of the Arab nation. Jordan also offered Iraq the assistance and facilities which enabled it to defend the Arab nation and confront the aggression. Jordan still opposes any attempt to undermine the national integrity of the Iraqi territory. Jordan urged the international community to end the suffering of the Iraqi people resulting from the blockade imposed on them. During the Gulf crisis, our principled stand was misunderstood. We do not support that the territory of any state be occupied by another state. We reject the use of force to settle differences. Therefore, after the Gulf crisis we sought to clarify the reality of our stand and to restore our relations with some Gulf states to their past amity and solidarity. Our efforts have been successful. Some Gulf states understood our position. Our relations with them have returned to normal. However, other states do not seem to be willing to open a dialogue, understand matters as they are, or to forget the past and revive solidarity. [passage omitted]

Responding to a question on the relationship between the recent Israeli threats and Jordan's demands that al-'Aqabah siege be lifted, the minister said that Jordan rejects the continuation of this siege, and that it insists on linking its return to the negotiations to having the siege lifted.

He stressed that Jordan does not fear the Israeli threats, and that its demand that the siege be lifted is a strategic demand, not a maneuver or a tactic.

The minister stressed that Jordan rejects the inspection of al-'Aqbah-bound by foreign forces at the port's jetties.

He said that ship inspections must either be a pure Jordanian responsibility or that of a civilian neutral side.

Papers Reject Israeli 'Allegations' of Hamas Support

'Chain of Pressure' Seen

JN1604083494 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 16 Apr 94 pp 1, 25

[Editorial: "False and Rejected Allegations!"]

[Text] Following the fedayeen operations carried out by Palestinian citizens inside the "green line" in 'Afula and Hadera in reply to the massacre at the holy al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, the leaders of Israel have begun to utter threats and level accusations indiscriminately. The most recent threats were uttered by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, who accused Jordan of allowing the free movement of Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement] on Jordanian territory. They also said that the official Hamas spokesman claimed responsibility for the 'Afula and Hadera operations!

It is true that a media official sympathizing with Hamas has boastfully claimed responsibility for these operations. However, the real announcement about this responsibility came first from loudspeakers in the Abu-Khudayr Mosque and other mosques in Gaza. Thus, Israel's allegations that Jordan allows freedom of movement for Hamas—only because a media official claimed responsibility for the two operations—are false and rejected allegations. The threats uttered by the Israeli prime minister and foreign minister are only one link in the chain of pressure and blackmail pursued by the Israeli leadership whenever it feels distressed and encircled.

It is known to both us and Israel that Hamas has no political or military organization, nor do its members or sympathizers carry out activities of a military nature, outside occupied Palestine. The whole story is that certain sympathizers in the Arab countries and other countries express support for, and sympathy with, Hamas in the occupied territories. Moreover, those who carried out the 'Afula and Hadera operations were Palestinians from the occupied territories; they carried out the two operations inside Israel despite the cordon and siege imposed on the occupied territories.

Jordan, which has rejected such threats in the past and which rejects them today, will not accept this tone by the Israeli leadership, and will not yield to any pressure or blackmail from any party whatsoever. Jordan also believes that the Israeli leadership should realize that its procrastination concerning the peace process, its failure to recognize the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, and its failure to withdraw from the occupied territories are the reason and driving force for all acts of violence. This leadership should be aware that a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace would guarantee regional stability and entrench security. Threats and insistence on both occupation and aggression will only yield more bloodshed, victims, and violence.

Remarks 'Do Not Scare' Country

JN1604095094 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 16 Apr 94 p 28

["Every Day" column by Tariq Masarwah: "Security Bankruptcy and the Failure of the Peace Game"]

[Text] The Rabin-Peres warnings to Jordan declare the failure of Israeli policies in the occupied territory. Hamas is not in Amman, but in 'Afula, Hadera, Gaza, Hebron, and in every part of Palestine. Hamas communiques are faxed, in moments, from Jerusalem—which they call the eternal capital of Israel—to Amman, Damascus, and London. Jordan Television broadcast a very brief report, no more than a minute, about the Hadera explosion while the Israeli radio carried for one and a half hours a report about the explosion and the reactions to this explosion.

These Israeli threats do not scare us; they are a declaration of the bankruptcy of the military and security occupation forces inside the occupied territory and an unconvincing quest for excuses, outside the occupied territory, to justify this failure. The occupation is an impasse for Rabin and Peres, not for Jordan. Violent resistance against occupation has exposed the game of peace, and turned the doves of the Labor Party—who preach about the prosperity that will be achieved in the region once the Middle East market is established—into hawks who make threats against others. Violent resistance has also who turned carriers of olive branches into pilots of lethal U.S. aircraft. They want the game to play in accordance with their own rules and, if it deviates from this course, war will be the alternative.

We say these ridiculous Israeli threats will not scare us. We will put them in our political calculations together with the U.S. siege on al-'Aqabah.

We know that the U.S. Embassy [in Amman] has been working, since the 'Afula incident, to mobilize public opinion against two youths who carry Hamas faxes to the Jordanian media just as Arab journalists in London carry Hamas faxes to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, AL-HAYAH, AL-QUDS AL-DUWALI, and AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI. Hamas communiques reach us as they reach every part in the world.

The Labor Party doves, who turned into hawks, and peace advocates who turned into warmongers, have reached a deadlock and the game of peace has deviated from its course and has been exposed. And Jordan is not responsible for this.

Accusations Stem From 'Impotence'

JN1604100594 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 16 Apr 94 pp 1, 18

[Editorial: "Impotence and Despair Are Behind Israel's Accusations"]

[Text] The accusations the Rabin government has leveled at Jordan about alleged activity by Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement] on Jordanian territory and about Jordanian-Hamas relations are baseless.

These accusations stem from the Rabin government's failure to end the intifadah in the occupied territories and from its frustration and despair about limiting the fedayeen operations carried out by Hamas and other Palestinian organizations. No doubt, Rabin himself is fully aware that the Hamas leadership in the occupied territories is the party that plans the operations and activities against Israeli occupation.

The Rabin government also knows that Jordan has no role in, or any link to, the activity of Hamas or other organizations in the occupied territories. Hamas does not consult Jordan or any other party when it, or other Palestinian faction or organization, carries out fedayeen operations against Israeli occupation in order to avenge the massacre committed by the Jewish settlers in cooperation with Israeli occupation troops.

Rabin himself certainly knows that Jordan is participating in the peace process and making a great deal of honest and sincere efforts in order to champion a comprehensive and just peace in the region at a time when Hamas opposes both the peace process and the Oslo agreement signed by Israel and the PLO.

Jordan warns against a collapse in the peace process due to Israel's intransigence and procrastination. It also warns that the region could face a real disaster if the negotiations fail on all tracks. On the contrary, Hamas and 10 other Palestinian factions reject the Israeli terms on whose basis the Oslo agreement was signed.

The accusations by Rabin and Peres that Jordan supports Hamas are either part of the pressure and harassment campaign being pursued against Jordan—including, for example, the siege of al-'Aqabah—or a new link in this campaign designed to force Jordan into signing a declaration of principles with Israel before, or even without, addressing the water, border, and refugee issues.

The accusations leveled by Rabin and Peres against Jordan and their instigation of the U.S. Administration against Jordan are a new sign of their government's bankruptcy and failure to take a courageous step in order to activate the peace process on the four tracks based on UN Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and on the land-for-peace principle.

The Jordanian media only reported the 'Afula and Hadera operations, carried out by Hamas, just as foreign media did. The Jordanian media also cited foreign sources that reported the Hamas announcement on its responsibility for these operations from loudspeakers in Gaza mosques prior to the statement made by a Hamas information official during his stopover in Jordan.

Israel's fabrications about an alleged Jordan-Hamas relationship only seek to conceal Israel's impotence and bankruptcy.

Threats Said Part of Pressure Campaign

JN1604120094 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 16 Apr 94 p 17

[Editorial: "The Rabin-Peres Campaign Is a Completion of the Threats and Pressure"]

[Text] The campaign launched by the Israeli prime minister and foreign minister against Jordan yesterday was part of a campaign with multiple purposes.

Since the time this country chose a consistent and clear policy on dealing with events, campaigns and pressure have been directed against it with the aim of ending its sound views and judgment and of dragging it into positions and decisions that many parties have experienced and which would lead to further losses, complications, problems, and damages.

Jordan was the first party to call for peace based on justice and comprehensiveness. At a time when Jordan was aware of the requirements of its role in the international community in terms of commitment to charters and resolutions, it maintained both its consistent pan-Arab position on the Palestine question and its demand that the Arab rights be regained as a mandatory condition for peace to be established and maintained.

Jordan also believed in the importance of peoples' participation in decisionmaking and self-determination. Thus, Jordan proceeded with its blessed march toward democracy without hesitation and despite all circumstances. Moreover, a wider participation in decisionmaking is being garnered now, and all doors are being opened to a frank and responsible dialogue within the framework of the law. Jordan has thus presented the Arab model of an institutional state. Israel used to claim that it was the only such model, and that there was no regional democracy that recognizes the people's right to power sharing and free choice. When Rabin and Peres level accusations at Jordan and utter threats against it now, the matter becomes clear. This is because, at a time when we are facing both a siege that has been imposed on us since the Gulf war and Israel's intransigence in repressing our kinsfolk in the occupied territories, our verbal expressions can only demand justice and commitment to international legitimacy, and warn against the consequences of dealing with us and with other Arab peoples in a manner which exerts further pressure.

The talk about peace and its importance for the region's future and welfare of its peoples has been ours. When we talked about peace in the past, we suffered much in terms of false accusations and slander campaigns. But as others' positions have circumvented justice as part of the desired peace, we can only remain faithful to our positions and principles regardless of campaigns and pressure. These positions and principles will not be sold out, nor will any Arab right in Jordan, Palestine, or elsewhere. This is because we do not accept sellouts in response to threats and pressure out of our regard for all religions, norms, and laws. Selling out will not establish a just peace that will last and be accepted by the people.

Paper: Country Implements Own Policies

JN1704092594 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 17 Apr 94 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Yes, Jordan Acts According to its Own Conviction, and Does Not Implement Others' Policy"]

[Text] There is no longer any doubt that the Rabin government is facing a difficult impasse these days. After losing both its credibility and international reputation, and after appearing as a terrorist state that supports terrorism, the Rabin government has become nervous and upset and has begun to blame others for its impasse.

When the Israeli Army's collusion with the racist settlers in committing the crime of the age at the holy Ibrahimi Mosque was confirmed, the Rabin government chose to move its political battle outside Israel. It did so particularly after its clear-cut failure to confront the escalating intifadah and fedayeen operations, represented by the 'Afula and Hadera operations. This escalation embarrassed and confused the Rabin government before the Israeli public opinion. It also doubled the Israeli opposition's activity against the government and the demand to topple it.

In order to calm the onslaught of the Likud opposition and decrease the indignation of influential settlers, the Rabin government leveled false accusations against Jordan, claiming that Jordan supports terrorism, and using as a pretext a statement made by a Hamas information spokesman, during his stopover in Jordan, about the 'Afula and Hadera operations. This is despite the fact that the Rabin government is fully aware of the true principled Jordanian position.

As His Majesty King Husayn said while chairing part of the Council of Ministers' session, Jordan does not recognize any organization other than the PLO. Jordan also condemns terrorism and has offered sacrifices and blood in confronting terrorism and terrorists; the blood of Jordan's sons was shed in Arab and foreign capitals at the hands of terrorists.

Since the very beginning, Jordan has believed that terrorism does not make a just and comprehensive peace; on the contrary, terrorism, as King Husayn said, kills peace and foils peace initiatives. Now that the Palestinian people—who are frustrated and on the verge of despair over the possibility of achieving a just and comprehensive peace and regaining their national rights—have determined to continue their struggle and escalate their fedayeen operations and intifadah until the occupation is removed. The Rabin government itself is the party responsible for creating this frustration and despair among Palestinian circles, political forces, and organizations.

Therefore, our kinsfolk in the occupied territories, as King Husayn said, are determined to continue struggle and resistance until occupation is removed. Also as King Husayn said, Jordan—which condemns and fights terrorism because it conflicts with the principles of our true religion, Islam, and with our Arab values and ideals—acts according to its own conviction, and will not accept to implement the convictions of others or receive instructions from any party whatsoever. This is because Israel is primarily responsible for the Palestinians' frustration and despair and for the escalation in the acts of violence and counterviolence.

Government Reacts to Killing of Iraqi Dissident

NC1504181994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1435 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Beirut, 15 Apr (MENA)—The assassination of Iraqi opposition figure Talib Suhayl al-Tamimi in his house in Beirut continues to cause political and diplomatic interactions, particularly after two Iraqi diplomats confessed yesterday to the Lebanese judicial authorities and also before 'Awad Fakhri, Iraqi charge d'affaires in Lebanon that they were involved in the assassination.

While the Lebanese Foreign Ministry is expecting today to receive the Iraqi Government's reply to its request to lift the diplomats' immunity in order to try them before Lebanese courts, diplomatic sources expect the Iraqi reply to be negative and expect the Lebanese Government to expel Cultural Attache Khalid Khalaf and Cultural Attache Muhammad Kamil Kazim next week after indicting them in accordance with Lebanese laws. [passage omitted]

The Lebanese judicial authorities have asked the Foreign Ministry departments to provide them with a copy of the full identity papers of 'Ali Sultan Darwish, the Iraqi consul in the embassy.

Security authorities last night arrested Muhammad Rashid, manager of the al-Rafidayn Bank, and two of the bank's employees. They are being investigated at the same time as the Lebanese security forces continue to surround the Iraqi Embassy building. Security sources said that the siege will not be lifted until the wanted men are handed over.

The Iraqi Embassy issued a statement rejecting the measures taken around the embassy as a violation of diplomatic norms. [passage omitted]

As part of the security measures taken in connection with the assassination, security men raided a number of apartments in northern Beirut where members of the group that planned and carried out the assassination reside. The security men confiscated guns, ammunition, and silencers.

Lebanese press reports said that the judicial investigation into the assassination of Iraqi opposition figure Talib Suhayl al-Tamimi has revealed serious information. The confessions of the two Iraqi diplomats accused of the assassination indicated that there is an intelligence network [words indistinct] within another group of employees of the Iraqi Embassy and the al-Rafidayn Bank, including an Armenian shirt maker called George Tartajian who helped the defendants reach the house of the victim. He has been arrested.

The paper AL-SAFIR, which published this information today, said that the order from Baghdad to assassinate al-Tamimi came in a coded telex message to the al-Rafidayn Bank center in al-Sadat Street in Ra's Beirut.

Severing Relations Considered

PM1504122194 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Apr 94 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Lebanon Hints at Severing Relations With Iraq"]

[Excerpts] London-Beirut-Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Yesterday the Lebanese Government officially requested that Iraq lift the immunity of Iraqi diplomats Khalid Kahalaf and Muhammad Kazim, who are accused of assassinating Iraqi oppositionist Talib Suhayl in Beirut the day before yesterday evening. It also turned down a request submitted by the Iraqi Embassy in Beirut that the two detained diplomats be released, saying that they are under "guard" for their own safety and investigation requirements. [passage omitted]

Official Lebanese sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT yesterday that, if the Lebanese Government receives a negative response to its request that the immunity of the two detained diplomats be lifted and that the third man accused of the crime be handed over, it could decide to sever diplomatic relations with Baghdad.

The sources added that a decision would be made after consultation with Charge D'Affaires Sa'd Zakhya, the only Lebanese diplomat in Baghdad, who was summoned by the Lebanese Foreign Ministry for "consultation." The Lebanese sources added that, if Baghdad refuses to lift the immunity of the detained culture and trade attaches, they would be declared persona non grata and expelled from Lebanese territory. [passage omitted]

Iraqi Foreign Ministry Replies

NC1604121794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] This morning Foreign Ministry Secretary General Zafir al-Hasan met with Iraqi Charge d'Affaires 'Awad Fakhri, who conveyed the Iraqi Foreign Ministry's official reply to Lebanon's request that Iraq lift the diplomatic immunity of Iraq's trade and cultural attaches, who are in custody on charges of assassinating Iraqi citizen Talib al-Suhayl al-Tamimi. The Iraqi diplomat declined to disclose the contents of the reply.

[Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1115 GMT on 16 April in a Beirut-datelined item reports that "Iraq has turned down the Lebanese Foreign Ministry's request that it lift the diplomatic immunity of those accused of assassinating Iraqi opposition figure Talib Suhayl al-Tamimi." The report adds that the Iraqi diplomat expressed hopes that "the Lebanese Government will not sever diplomatic relations with Iraq because of its refusal to lift the diplomatic immunity of the defendants."]

Buwayz Views Israeli Stance in Peace Talks

NC1804082894 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] In a statement to the newspaper AL-SAFIR published today, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz asks what Israel wants the Lebanese delegation to negotiate in the peace talks. He said: Lebanon's stance is clear; it demands implementation of Security Council Resolution 425 providing for Israeli withdrawal to the internationally recognized borders to enable the legitimate Lebanese Government to extend its sovereignty throughout Lebanon. He added: Lebanon will then obligate itself and pledge to exercise its responsibility as a government and undertake to keep law and order in the area from which Israel will withdraw. Buwayz said: We tell the Israelis that this resolution is independent of the Middle East dispute. He added: Let them acknowledge this principle and then we will be ready to form a joint military committee to prepare an agenda and take the necessary steps to implement security measures. Then, and in solidarity with the other Arab countries, Lebanon will make progress in the peace talks and may then recognize a state of comprehensive and final peace.

Buwayz said: We offered to make progress in two stages: The first is a purely Lebanese stage through implementation of Resolution 425 and the second concerns progress on the regional level. He asked: What did Israel do? He said that Israel linked the Lebanese file with all the regional files, particularly the Syrian one. He noted that Israel is demanding that the Lebanese Government control the resistance as a precondition although it knows that this is impossible. Israel also knows that the resistance is a result, not a cause, of the occupation. The result cannot be eliminated before the cause is first removed. He said: Israel knows full well that this or any other Lebanese Government cannot give up the principle of resistance as long as it has no sure and definite guarantees to regain its territory. Thus, he said, Israel is setting out an impossible precondition whereas we pledge to establish peace and stability when Israel withdraws from the south. Moreover, Israel links its withdrawal with the signing of a comprehensive peace agreement. Israel knows that a comprehensive agreement requires the restoration of all Arab rights.

Buwayz pointed out that Israel links the south Lebanon problem with the regional problem. This is not the first time Israel has done this. He said that Israel maintained the same attitude after the 17 May Agreement. After one and a half years of peace negotiations and after ending the negotiations, Israel links the result of all negotiations with Syrian approval and commitment to security in south Lebanon and even with the political part of the agreement. He said that Israel accuses us of linking our file with that of Syria. He said: It is Israel that links our file with Syria's. Israel accuses us of linking our file with the regional file although it is the party that does this.

Buwayz noted that Israel maintains that it cannot make progress on one track while it has made no progress on the Palestinian track. Israel is deliberately prevaricating to foil this round in the hope of reaching particular agreements with the Palestinians.

Discussing the multilateral negotiations and Lebanon's refusal to take part, Buwayz said: Lebanon maintains this stance because we are still determined and more convinced than ever that joining the multilateral talks is premature. We cannot join these talks before the bilateral talks make firm, tangible, and substantial progress. We insist on our position that participation in the multilateral talks is wrong. Lebanon was the first country to warn against joining the multilateral talks. He revealed that there is a regional-international plan to solve the problem of Palestinian refugees in the diaspora, a solution that provides for settling these refugees living in Syria, Egypt, and Jordan, where they are now, and for distributing the Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon.

Speaker Birri Leaves for Amman on Official Visit

NC1604094394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri left Beirut for Amman today on an official four-day visit to Jordan at the invitation of Tahir al-Masri, speaker of the Jordanian House of Represenatives.

Birri expressed hope that during the visit he would be able to meet with King Husayn, the prime minister, and the speaker of the House of Notables.

SLA 'Massacre' in 'Aramta Village Reported

NC1604083894 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Agent Lahd's militia elements [South Lebanese Army—SLA] entered the village of 'Aramta this morning to commit a massacre. They killed citizen Jihad Jahjah on the road and assassinated citizen Fu'ad Jandal Yunus in his home. They also wounded Warrant Officer Nabil al-Haj and a woman named Umm-Sulayman. The agents evicted the village's inhabitants to Jazzin.

Details Reported

NC1604172394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Excerpt] Lebanese villages just north of the occupied border strip came under further Israeli attacks today. The eastern hills of Kafr Rumman were shelled from the position of the occupation forces in al-Dabshah at 1500 today. Majdal Silm and Wadi al-Saluqi came under shell fire at noon today. Israeli planes overflew the central sector, al-Nabatiyah, and Iqlim al-Tuffah.

Security reports tell about a massacre in 'Aramta last night. The details are as follows: About 20 Lahd [South Lebanese Army] militiamen entered 'Aramta, firing wildly in all directions. The militiamen then broke into houses and wantonly shot several citizens, killing four and wounding several others, including Jihad Hikmat Jarjah and Fu'ad Jandal Yunus. Two bodies are yet to be identified.

The Lahd militia then took the town's entire population of 70—many had already deserted the town—to Jazzin, where they were made to sleep outdoors. Today, the occupation forces and their agents took the 'Aramta inhabitants from Jazzin to Marj 'Uyun to question them about resistance fighters. The women were then released, but the men are still in custody. [passage omitted]

Red Cross Convoy Enters 'Aramta

NC1704163194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] A convoy of the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] led by a representative and escorted by a patrol of the Lebanese police and civil defense entered 'Aramta before noon today. The convoy spent three hours in the town, toured its neighborhoods, and met the inhabitants to get acquainted with their conditions. The convoy then returned to Jazzin, where its members met with Deputy Samir 'Azar and told him that they will report to the ICRC on the situation in 'Aramta.

Following the meeting, Deputy 'Azar said that the ICRC officials told him that the situation is peaceful and normal in 'Aramta and that foodstuff is available.

The ICRC officials promised to issue a statement on their tour of the town.

Resistance Blows Up SLA Vehicle, Kills 5

NC1604090394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Resistance fighters carried out an operation against an occupation forces post in Dahr al-Ramlah in Jazzin at 0750 today. They blew up a vehicle belonging to the agents [South Lebanese Army—SLA], killing its five occupants. Following the operation, the occupation forces sent reinforcements to the post. A second group of Islamic Resistance fighters detonated a large bomb as the reinforcements were passing by at 0840, killing or wounding seven enemy personnel.

Meanwhile, this morning the al-Maslakh quarter in al-Nabatiyah came under artillery shelling from the Israeli occupation forces' positions in 'Ali al-Tahir. A number of people were wounded and taken to the government hospital in al-Nabatiyah.

Israeli Mock Raids, Shelling Reported

NC1704161694 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Israeli warplanes staged several sorties over the south this morning, specifically over the al-Nabatiyah and the Iqlim al-Tuffah areas. They staged two mock raids at low altitude and broke the sound barrier.

The eastern hills and the outskirts of Kafr Rumman came under heavy machine-gun fire at 0800 today from the Israeli forces' positions in al-Dabshah.

In the central sector, the outskirts of the town of Yatar came under intensive machine-gun fire at midnight last night while the sky overhead was lit by flares.

In the Marj 'Uyun area, an agent Lahd [South Lebanese Army] unit combed with machine-gun fire the main road that links Marj 'Uyun with the Zumarayya crossing point and that passes through the al-Khiyan junction and the Nab' al-Hasbani.

According to information received from the occupied strip, the SLA command interrogated a number of its members following the explosion of a device under one of its patrols at the entrance to Marj 'Uyun three days ago. The explosion killed recruit Faris Ilyas Jabbur from Kawkaba and injured another.

Israeli Force Takes Over SLA Position

NC1804104194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] According to arrivals from the occupied border strip this morning, a 35-strong Israeli force backed by vehicles and personnel carriers has advanced, taken up position in the 'Alman outpost, and hoisted the Israeli flag. Antoine Lahd militiamen [South Lebanese Army—SLA] manned this position before. UN sources have confirmed that the reports are true.

Junblatt Opposes Rocket Attacks on Northern Israel

NC1704110794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] In an interview with the newspaper AL-HAYAH, Minister Walid Junblatt expressed his opposition to the rocket bombardment of northern Israel, describing it as politically unprofitable. Junblatt said such attacks might create conditions similar to those leading to the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

Army Finds Explosives; Lebanese Forces Implicated

NC1504163794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] Our security correspondent told us a short while ago that in the context of investigations held by Justice Joseph Furayhah, investigating magistrate in the case involving the bombing in Sayyidat al-Najat church bombing, and as a result of the confessions made by a number of the Lebanese Forces' shock troops, an Army unit last night began a search for 17 bags said to contain bombs, powerful explosives, and detonators. The bags were believed to be in the possession of certain individuals living in 15 different villages. The unit succeeded in finding 12 bags and are looking for the rest. Several individuals were remanded in custody in connection with the recent findings.

Army Force Storms Warehouse, Seizes Explosives

NC1704163094 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1530 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] A Lebanese Army force attacked a warehouse in the area of Jubayl yesterday evening. Large amounts of various types of explosives—a truckload—were confiscated.

An Army unit last Friday found 12 suitcases containing explosive charges, highly explosive material, and detonation fuses, to which arrested persons belonging to the Lebanese Forces' shock troops had led authorities.

Military Court Verdicts; Church Bombing Inquiry Resumes

NC1704063994 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
0430 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Excerpts] The military court passed verdicts in three cases at 2200 yesterday. The cases concern the assassination attempt on President Ilyas al-Hirawi, the bombings of tourist sites in al-Bahsas, and the killing of three security forces members in Qabb Ilyas. [passage omitted]

The verdicts read: 1. Regarding the attempt to assassinate President al-Hirawi, the military court sentenced Antoine Jabbur and Shihadah Shawwah to five years with hard labor. Cadet Shartan Bulus was sentenced to one year. Ghassan Tuma was sentenced in absentia to serve 20 years with hard labor. [passage omitted]

2. Concerning the al-Bahsas bombing, the military court sentenced 'Abd-al-Hakim Ahmad Hulayhil to 10 years with hard labor, Bilal Mustafa al-Kasm to seven years with hard labor, Hasan Sahyun to three years with hard labor, Ziyad Tuq to three years with hard labor, and Hasan Mallat to six months.

3. The military court passed the death sentence against Shakir al-Buraydi for killing three members of the security forces in Qabb Ilyas. The same defendant was also sentenced to seven years for the attempted murder of security forces members in May 1992.

Elsewhere, the NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY has learned that Judge Joseph Furayhah resumed investigations into the bombing of the Sayyidat al-Najat Church yesterday. He issued two warrants for the arrest of Jihad Sulayman and Butrus Jabbur, officers of the dissolved Lebanese Forces Party. Judge Furayhah withdrew the warrants issued for the arrest of Jawlan Diya' and Maurice Bastuti.

Phalangist Leader Views Media Suspension Decision

NC1604145194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1400 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Phalangist Party leader Dr. George Sa'adah has stated that the government's recent decision regarding the information media has harmed the security and judicial measures and has caused misinterpretations. He stressed his absolute trust in the security services and judicial authorities. He voiced his support for all forms of controls to safeguard the security and judicial measures while preserving the freedom of expression and views. He said: We are concerned about the return of refugees to their villages safe and sound. He expressed support for the General Labor Federation's moves and the right to stage demonstrations.

Al-Kasm, al-Shar' Confer With UN Fact-Finding Mission

JN1604154094 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1415 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Dr. 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Kasm, head of the National Security Office, at 1300 today received the UN Middle East fact-finding mission that comprises a number of journalists from various world countries.

Dr. al-Kasm answered journalists' questions concerning developments in the peace process and the Arab-Israeli conflict. He emphasized the constants of Syrian Arab policy, and its position on the just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

This morning, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received the mission, which includes ranking Western and Japanese media men. The foreign minister answered their questions and said Israel intransigence since the beginning of the peace process obstructed the realization of substantial progress in the peace process. Al- Shar' said the opportunity for peace is getting narrower day by day because of Israel's insistence on continuing its occupation of the Arab territories, contrary to the UN resolutions on which the peace process was based.

The foreign minister expressed Syria's determination to continue its objectives, which are identical with the international community's objectives, to realize a just and comprehensive peace in the region, in accordance with the Madrid formula. He stressed the importance of the objective role of mass media in the international arena in distinguishing between those who want real, just, and comprehensive peace, and those who block this peace.

Minister Comments on U.S. Drug Charges, Hamas

JN1504190094 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1720 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Report by Sana' al-Imam from Damascus]

[Text] Syrian Information Minister Muhammad Salman has said Syria is worried about an anti-Clinton campaign steered by Israel and the Zionist lobby in the United States to pressure the U.S. president into backtracking on understandings he reached with President al-Asad in Geneva and preempting developments in bilateral ties.

In remarks to foreign journalists, the minister emphasized that Zionist pressure had neutralized the positive signals sent by the Geneva summit. Clinton, according to Salman, has one of two choices—either defend U.S. interests in the region and thus put his career on the line, or give in to Zionist pressure and thereby forfeit America's credibility.

Salman charged that Israel was out to exclude the United States from the region by convincing it that its interests are best served by Israel. He produced an American document titled Syrian-American Cooperation to Combat Drugs in Lebanon, in which the United States applauds Syria's anti-drug measures over the past few years. Syria, Salman said, was bewildered by the drug charges, especially seeing that it has been coordinating with the Americans in the fight against these poisons. The pressure on Syria, he maintained, is calculated to undermine its negotiating position and split the Syrian and Lebanese tracks at the talks with Israel. Salman contended that drug abuse and trafficking in Syria are virtually nonexistent. He explained that drug traffickers in Syria receive the death sentence and abusers receive at least three years in prison. In contrast, the minister said, drug abuse and trafficking were widespread in the West, in particular in the United States.

On another subject, the Syrian minister said that even if the Oslo agreement was implemented to the letter, it would fail to bring peace to the region. The terms of the agreement are such that the Palestinian people will be in a large jail. The Oslo agreement has strengthened opposition Palestinian factions and made them more popular inside and outside the occupied territories, Salman added. 'Arafat's unilateral agreement with Israel has had a negative impact inside the occupied territories. There have been a disproportionately high number of Palestinian casualties since the Oslo agreement, which he said had a clearly negative bearing on the Arab negotiating partners.

The Syrian minister denied that there are relations between Hamas, the Islamic resistance movement, and Syria. He stressed that Hamas' activities are restricted to the occupied territories and the group is working to liberate occupied Palestinian territory.

Afghanistan

Golboddin-Dostam Militia Attack on Kabul Viewed

LD1504183894 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] The Golboddin-Dostam militia once again embarked on aggression against the Islamic army's positions and put the residential regions of Kabul city under a rain of rocket and mortar fire. The military correspondent of the BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY reports that the criminal Golboddin-Dostam militia, following yesterday's failed attack—launching rockets and firing heavy weapons—last night also launched hundreds of rockets from the type of SAKAR, BM-12, BM-21, and mortar mine on residential regions of Kabul city. As a result of the launched rockets, which mostly landed on the residential regions of the 11th, 10th, fourth and second wards of the city, a number of our compatriots were martyred and a number were seriously injured. As a result of this lunatic action of Hekmatyar, in addition to loss of life, a number of residential houses, and government buildings located in the above wards were either destroyed or damaged. One mosque located in Khairkhana III was demolished.

The report adds that the infamous Golboddin-Dostam militia last night embarked on infantry aggression against the positions of the Islamic state's forces from the direction of Bala Hesar. It was foiled in the same way as their other unsuccessful attacks. With the blessing of Almighty God, courageous resistance by the mojahedin and soldiers of the Islamic army, the enemy was forced to retreat. A responsible security source put the enemy losses at 20 dead and 10 injured.

Military observers believe the recent actions by the Golboddin-Dostam mercenary militiamen in Kabul are an effort to recompense and disguise the repeated defeats of militia in the north and to disrupt the peace process in the country. The murderer and adventurist militiamen of Golboddin-Dostam can only see their political-military survival in fighting and in continuation of tension. This claim can be entirely substantiated by Golboddin Hekmatyar's (?utterance) made yesterday at a meeting with the peace delegation consisting of ulema from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Bangladesh and some Jehadi leaders and personalities of Afghanistan. In reply to a question by a peace-seeking ulema who asked Hekmatyar to refrain, for the sake of holy Koran, from further bloodshed, destruction, and further defaming of Jehad and Islam, and asked him to open supply routes for the Muslim and innocent people of Kabul and to stop firing blind rockets, Hekmatyar with anger and disrespect said: I will fight for another 25 years against the Islamic sovereignty and people. And I would not reverse until I gain power.

This is happening at a time when esteemed professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, despite unforgivable crimes committed by Golboddin, has displayed flexibility and [words indistinct] in honor of the peace delegation from the fraternal countries of Saudi, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, as well as Jehadi leaders and personalities of Afghanistan. Relying on the usual strategy of the Islamic state, which is resolving the country's issues by talks and understanding, Rabbani declared a unilateral cease-fire in Kabul. But the Golboddin-Dostam militia, ignoring the cease-fire, have been attacking the positions of the Islamic army and residential regions during the past two days with heavy weapons and infantry forces. The Islamic state's forces responded to these attacks by defending their positions and safeguarding the life and property of the civil population in Kabul city.

Mojahedin Capture 12 Militia Security Posts

LD1704192294 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] As many as 12 hilltop security posts of the militia in the direction of Kayan Dara in Baghlan Province have been captured by the mojahedin. A responsible security source of the country told a military correspondent of BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY that in a successful mopping-up operation, the mojahedin captured 12 militia posts in Nawbahar, Alokag, Poshtak, Debak, and Kataposta areas. In the operation 10 militia were killed and 10 others were taken prisoner. General Yaqub, a comander of the militia, is also among the prisoners.

Similarly four posts of the (?coordination council's) militia in Hassantal and the old town of Baghlan, in Baghlan Province, have been captured by mojahedin and forces of the Islamic army. A mopping-up operation in Baghlan Province to clear the Baghlan Province of the militia continues.

Fifty Dostum Militia Surrender to Islamic Army in Fariab

LD1704192694 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Fifty Dostum militia surrendered to forces of the Islamic army in Fariab Province. Reports received by BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY from Fariab Province say the men, headed by Habibollah, realizing the inhuman and un-Islamic character of Dostum's militia, joined the forces of Jehadi Division 24 of the province in Qoshqar area in Fariab Province along with five rocket launchers, eight PK machine guns, and two ZK1 machine guns. The report adds that the surrendered people expressed their hatred of the crimes and atrocities of Dostumites and promised that, with all their will, they are ready to fight against Dostum's militia.

UN Mission Meets With Dostum, Leaves for Herat

LD1804084994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0730 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] Continuing their meetings with the leaders of the rival Afghan groups, the UN delegation left Mazar-e Sharif for Herat yesterday. The members of this delegation are to hold talks with the provincial governor of Herat, who is a member of Jamiat-e Eslami.

Before leaving Mazar-e Sharif, Mahmud Mestiri, the leader of the UN delegation, had another meeting with Abdol Rashid Dostum, the leader of the National-Islamic Movement of Afghanistan. According to the Central News Unit from Islamabad, Dostum said the only way to establish peace in Afghanistan is for Rabbani to resign as president.

National Islamic Front Leader Calls For Cease-Fire

LD1504190994 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] Esteemed Pir Sayyed Ahmad Gaylani, leader of the Mahaz-e Meli-ye Eslami [National Islamic Front], asks for a cease-fire, first of all, for solving the country's current problems. After meeting the UN secretary general's special envoy in Peshawar, Pir Gaylani in his interview with a VOA reporter said: After the cease-fire a Loya Jerga [great council] or an urgent invited council should be set up. The council should have the power to appoint the future government and its leader, in order to take the place of the present government after the end of term of esteemed professor Borhanoddin Rabbani's leadership. Pir Sayyed Ahmad Gaylani further said: The above Shura council is to start work under the supervision of the United Nations and Conference of the Islamic Countries and is to take urgent action for the restoration of security. He added: The future government can devise the constitution through the Loya Jerga, in which the people's genuine representatives can take part. Thus, the ground will be prepared for a free election.

Afghan Arabs Reportedly Retrain at Camps

PM1504122994 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Apr 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Salih Qallab: "Camps Reopened To Train 'Afghan Arabs'"]

[Excerpt] Islamabad-London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—[Passage omitted] The leader of a major Afghan faction, who asked to remain anonymous, has said that the majority of Arab volunteers in the Afghan jihad, known as the Afghan Arabs, are in Afghanistan, and that camps have been opened to retrain and rehabilitate them in order to send them to their original countries under a plan supervised by some fundamentalist parties and forces in the Arab region. Asked about the faction sponsoring, training, and rehabilitating these Afghan Arabs, the Afghan leader said that all the major Afghan factions have such camps, and that the Arab region will witness new waves of violence unless conditions in Afghanistan calm down and one central authority is established. [passage omitted]

Construction Minister Chairs Government Meeting

LD1704174994 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Presided over by esteemed Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai, minister of city construction and housing, the high session of ministers held a session today. The press office of the prime minister reported to BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY that the high session of ministers discussed the current situation in the country. After giving information on the result of the visits of the UN secretary general's special envoy and the ulema of the Islamic countries of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, the basic points of the coordinated proposal of the Joint Conciliation Council of Afghanistan was discussed. After the proposal was discussed in the meeting, it was presented to the Cabinet peace delegation for requisite views and consultation for its further enrichment.

India

Officials, Parties React to Signing of GATT Accord

Congress-I Welcomes Signing

BK1504162694 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] The Congress-I has welcomed the signing of the new GATT accord by India at Marrakech and charged the opposition with indulging in a disinformation campaign on the issue. Speaking to reporters in New Delhi today, the party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, said the agreement will boost India's agricultural and textile exports. He said the government will now have to translate the agreement into various laws and these have to come before parliament.

The minister of state for commerce, Mr. Kamaluddin Ahmad, said that the new agreement is on the whole beneficial to India. Speaking to a group of foreign journalists in New Delhi today, he reaffirmed India's faith in a rule-based transparent multilateral trading system.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] president, Mr. L.K. Advani, has criticized the signing of the Marrakech Declaration by India. He said in New Delhi that the treaty has been conceived by developed countries to promote their trade interests.

Other 'Mixed Reaction' Noted

BK1604110494 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] The signing of the GATT by India at Marrakesh has evoked mixed reaction. The former prime minister and the Samajwadi Janata Party leader, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, has criticized the signing of the GATT adopting Dunkel proposals by India. Addressing public meetings at Chandigarh, Ludhiana and Amritsar yesterday, Mr. Chandra Shekhar said these proposals will badly affect and erode the Indian values swadeshi [indigenousness] and self-sufficiency as propounded by Mahatama Gandhi and other leaders.

Reacting to the signing of GATT by the government, the Uttar Pradesh chief minister, Mulayam Singh Yadav, said the people should have been taken into confidence before signing it. He said the chief ministers should have been consulted before signing the agreement which would affect the national interests. The Bihar chief minister, Mr. Lalu Prasad Yadav, addressing a public meeting at Sopol, charged the Congress-I with selling out the country's sovereignty by signing the agreement.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] yesterday observed a protest day in Madhya Pradesh against the signing of GATT, while the Communist Party of India-Marxist observed the black day in the state. Janata Dal workers held demonstrations in some towns of Uttar Pradesh. However, the Congress-I has welcomed the signing of agreement by India and charged the Opposition with indulging in a disinformation campaign on the issue. Speaking to reporters in New Delhi yesterday, the party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, said the agreement will boost India's agricultural and textile exports.

Accord Called 'Historic Step'

BK1604105094 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0255 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Commentary by N. Madhavan]

[Text] The signing of the declaration for a new multilateral trade regime at Marrakesh by 125 countries, including India, marks the end of a long and arduous journey that began at Punta Del Este in Uruguay across the Atlantic nearly a decade ago, but there may still be some hurdles to go. Even as the agreement for a new multilateral trade regime was being signed, other indications signalled that some irritants still remain. The United States and Japan have not quite ended their trade dispute and the United States and the European Union have not taken back the demand to link social issues like labor standards out of the basic framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Nevertheless, the Marrakesh accord signed last night is a historic step because it considerably reduces the walls of protectionism which stood in the way of freer trade. For one, tariff barriers are expected to come down by 40 percent in all member countries. Second, the accord clears the way for the World Trade Organization—WTO—which will replace the GATT from 1 January next year and police world trade disputes. The final hurdle remains in the form of the national level ratification of the agreement in the legislatures of member countries, but it can be safely said that the ground has been laid for a body which will act as the arbiter in trade disputes. Further, the success of the Marrakesh accord will depend upon the ability of member countries to stick to their promises of functioning under the WTO and not resort to any act which will undermine it pending its creation. In particular, countries like the United States will have to stay away from selective bilateral action such as the invocation of Super 301 Law which forbids investment in bilateral (?grounds).

For the developing countries, this opens up crucial avenues. India particularly stands to gain by greater market access for its exports in agriculture and textiles, but it will have to ensure that the code is implemented in letter and spirit so that in aspects like patenting of seeds and drug prices apprehensions that India may be affected do not come true. India will also have to guard against the misuse of social issues like human rights, environmental safety norms, and labor standards for trade purposes by powerful countries. India is committed to these values itself, but both the timing and the manner in which these issues have been smuggled into the context of the Uruguay round shows that the WTO may be here, but a watchful eye is needed all the same. However, India has once again shown that it articulates and leads Third World's interests by raising the issue of immigration barriers in developed countries which act as a deterrent to the flow of labor which is an economic service. In sum, it is clear that India and the world must ensure that the gains from trade must go hand in hand with concern for justice and equality.

Further Reaction to GATT Accord

BK1704085694 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] The Gujarat chief minister, Mr. Chhabildas Mehta, has complimented the prime minister and the commerce minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, for signing the GATT agreement. In a message welcoming the agreement, Mr. Mehta said it will lead to increase in the export of food products and will provide a boost to agroindustries, thereby benefiting the farming community.

The Haryana chief minister, Mr. Bhajan Lal, has also welcomed the signing of the agreement. Talking to newsmen in Chandigarh today, he said all sections of society, including farmers and the industrialists, will benefit. Mr. Bhajan Lal said India will now be able to trade with 125 countries and the foodgrain exports to other countries will increase. The chief minister said that the farmers will get better prices for their produce and the percentage of subsidy to them will increase.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, has criticized the government for signing the accord. Addressing a press conference in Calcutta today, he said his party will oppose any move by the government to amend the existing laws in the wake of the GATT treaty.

Rao Defends Signing of GATT Accord

BK1704090394 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] The prime minister has strongly defended the signing of the GATT treaty by India and urged the people not to be misled by the opposition propaganda. Addressing a public meeting in Port Blair yesterday, he said the country has to be a partner in the global trade treaty for the sake of faster development. Mr. Rao said the small-scale sector will not in any way be affected by India joining the multilateral trade system.

Minister 'Strongly' Defends GATT Accord

BK1804130494 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] The commerce minister has strongly justified India signing the new GATT deal, saying the opposition stand is based on narrow partisan considerations. Mr. Pranab Mukherji, who returned to New Delhi from Marrakesh this morning, said there is no rationale in the demand for opting out of the global trading system. He pointed out that 20 more countries want to join the new trade agreement in addition to the 125 countries which are signatories to it.

'Official Sources' Say No Change in NPT Stand

BK1704160994 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Official sources in New Delhi have clarified that there is no change in India's stand on Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. New Delhi believes that nuclear nonproliferation must be universal, comprehensive, and nondiscriminatory. The sources said the prime minister had categorically stated this position in his recent address to the Army commanders conference. They were reacting to press reports that the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Atal behari Vajpayee, expressed the view that the prime minister's observations over the issue needs clarification.

The sources said Mr. Narasimha Rao in his speech made it clear that any attempt to restrict India's nuclear option will be unacceptable and unrealistic in view of Pakistan having acquired nuclear weapon capability. There is also proliferation of such weapons recently.

German Minister Says Human Rights Not To Affect Ties

BK1604131894 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 7 Apr 94 p 12

[Text] New Delhi—In a significant development Germany has said its economic relations with India will not be guided by non-economic issues like human rights and child labour.

This was stated by German Minister for Economics Guenter Rexrodt at a meeting organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Indo-German Chamber of Commerce here on Wednesday.

The German Minister's statement assumes significance in the wake of US' attempt to bring in human rights issues in GATT negotiations. The German Minister made it clear that his country was committed to free and unrestricted trade.

Rexrodt, who is accompanied by a high-level business delegation from Germany to attend the 11th Indo German Joint Commission meeting, said his country will not use non-tariff and noneconomic issues in trade negotiations, he said. "This is the stand we have taken in the Uruguay Round of negotiations," he said.

Indian industry is fearing that some developed countries may block exports from India by creating non-tariff hurdles such as human rights. "Germany never boycotts goods from other countries on the pretext of non-economic issues," Rexrodt said in response to a specific query. "Indian goods as well as Indian businessmen are welcome in our country," he said.

Referring to the pending bilateral accord between India and Germany on civil aviation, he said the "delay" was because the countries were sending "wrong signals."

"I must say the administrative process in India is complicated and takes a long time to finalise," he remarked adding that Germany attached importance to this bilateral accord on air transportation and regretted the delay.

Admitting that some countries had raised such non-economic and non-tariff issues in GATT negotiations, he said Germany was of the firm view that such issues should not be brought in trade negotiations. Rexrodt said Germany was also against "social dumping" as different countries had different social standards.

Home Minister Comments on Political Process in Kashmir

BK1604110294 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] The home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, says conditions in Kashmir are favorable for initiating a political process. Speaking to newspersons in Bombay yesterday, he said the antimilitancy drive in the valley has received a good response. Mr. Chavan said the people now realize that the activities of the militants have nothing to do with religion. Meanwhile, the CPI [Communist Party of India] has demanded immediate consultations by the national and the state parties to initiate a political process in Jammu and Kashmir. In a letter to the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, the party general secretary, Mr. Inderjit Gupta, said the government is relying mainly on administrative measures to tackle the serious problem. The CPI is opposed to this approach. The Janata Dal leader, Mr. George Fernandes, has urged the militants in Jammu and Kashmir to give up the path of violence and come to the negotiating table. Talking to newsmen in Jammu yesterday, he said this will help in restoring democratic process in the state.

In Jammu and Kashmir, 11 police personnel have been dismissed from service for dereliction of duty. They were found wanting in preventing militants from setting ablaze a bridge in Anantnag District. They did not put up resistance expected from them to avert the militants. The state government had announced earlier that stringent action will be taken against the defaulting police personnel. It also said the police personnel who show courage to thwart the militants action will be rewarded. As reported 20 policemen were dismissed last year on this account.

Muslims Protest Human Rights Violations in Pakistan

BK1804090394 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] Various Muslim organizations held a demonstration in the capital today to draw the world community's attention toward human rights violations in Pakistan. They also protested against the victimization of Urdu speaking muhajirs [Indian immigrants] by the Army in the Sind Province. Later, a delegation led by the Falah-i-Millat [Islamic Community Welfare] Action Committee's general secretary, Dr. Mohammad Furkan, submitted a memorandum to the Pakistani high commissioner urging upon Islamabad to stop atrocities against muhajirs and release the thousands of workers of the Muhajir Qaumi Movement languishing in jails for several years.

Security Forces Say 103 'Militants' Killed in Kashmir

BK1704101594 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, security forces claim to have achieved notable success in their operations against the militants. One hundred and three militants were killed during the last month. Security forces have seized more than 13,000 weapons, including 11 lakh ammunition, and about 40,000 grenades. An official spokesman told our Jammu correspondent that this is mainly because of cooperation being extended by people who are fed up with militancy sponsored by Pakistan.

Bomb Explodes Near Janata Dal Meeting in Kashmir

BK1804033594 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, a bomb exploded about 100 meters away from the venue of a public meeting addressed by the Janata Dal leader, Mr. George Fernandes, in Doda on Saturday. BSF [Border Security Force] sources said no damage was caused by the explosion.

Iran

Reaction to Events in Gorazde, Bosnia Reported

Velayati on Efforts To Send Troops

LD1604203894 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Dear viewers, as you saw and heard earlier, the town of Gorazde, which has been declared a safe haven by the United Nations, has come under severe attacks from the Serbs in recent days and there is a possibility that the town may fall completely and all the town's residents may be in danger. In view of the importance of this issue, we invited the honorable foreign minister, Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, to kindly come to the studio and grant us an interview in this regard. [passage omitted]

Dr. Velayati, I would be grateful if you could tell us about the Islamic Republic of Iran's stance on this issue and does Iran, by any chance, have any proposals towards ending the genocide of the Muslim people of Gorazde or not?

[Velayati] During the more than two years that have passed since the start of the Bosnian tragedy, the Islamic Republic of Iran has undertaken numerous steps—both within the framework of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] and the United Nations—and it is continuing to do so. Nearly all the ICO meetings that have been held have focused on the appointment of a contact group, representing the organization, with the purpose of making efforts at the United Nations. And the relatively positive steps that were taken at the UN General Assembly, I can tell you that all this was at Iran's initiative.

Iran has not confined itself to these political and international activities, but has also spared no effort in giving humanitarian assistance to Bosnian Muslims. However, efforts have been made, in various ways, to block the activities of Iran and sincere Islamic countries in this connection. For example, we suggested that we were prepared to put 10,000 of our forces at the disposal of the United Nations, so they could function as peacekeeping forces under the UN flag toward the implementation of Security Council resolutions and the protection of the honor and dignity of Muslims there. However, the United Nations, the Security Council and, specifically, the UN Secretary General have opposed our offer so far.

We have written letters and I have personally met Mr Butrus-Ghali, the UN secretary general, at least twice. Unfortunately, so far, permission has not been granted to Iran. We are determined to persevere so that, at least, the resolutions of the UN Security Council are implemented. So they put an end to their procrastination; so they refrain at last from trying to protect their own interests and further their own rivalries and try instead to safeguard the interests of the Bosnian people as members of the United Nations. I have to tell you that one of their most important aims is to prevent the establishment of an Islamic country in Europe.

[Announcer] Thank you.

Daily Protests UN 'Indifference'

LD1704102694 Tehran IRNA in English 0817 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 17, IRNA—A Persian daily here Sunday censured the United Nations for its indifference towards the tragedy of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

'JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI', editorialializing on the develpments in the Bosnian city of Gorazde wrote that despite being announced as a safe area by the U.N., Gorazde has been a target of the Serbs' shellings and chemical attacks over the past one month.

Due to the indifference of the U.N., said the daily, the situation has aggravated in the area to the extent that the Bosnian prime minister says what else the Serbs should commit to make them liable to punishment?

This statement will be recorded as a black point in the history of the U.N. as an organiztion that claims to support the rights of the nations and protect peace and security in the world, the paper said.

Turning to the hard conditions imposed on Bosnian Muslims and the fact that the Serbs do not abide by any rules and regulations, the daily criticized the U.N. for imposing an arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims whereby reducing them to defenceless victims of the criminal Serbs.

The bitter reality that the world witnesses today is the death of humanity in the West on the one hand, and the double-standard role of the U.N. on the other, the paper said, adding that the world nations should, therefore, protest against the U.N. which has been reduced to a protector of 'the law of jungle'.

Rohani Condemns UN 'Deceit'

LD1704115094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] In today's open session of the Majles, Mr. Rohani, the deputy speaker of the Islamic Consultative Majles described the onslaught of the Serbs against Gorazde as yet more evidence of the lies and deceit of international circles and the United Nations. He condemned the silence and time-wasting of the Security Council in response to the Serbs' aggression and said: Of all the resolutions passed by this council, only the resolution imposing an arms embargo on the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina is being implemented. This in itself encourages the Serbs to further carry on with their aggression and blood shedding.

On the downing of two U.S. helicopters by the fighters of the same country in northern Iraq, he said that this would lead to instability and insecurity for all the countries of the region and added that the downing was a result of America's domineering policies.

West's 'New Tactic' Criticized

NC1804103494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Commentary by News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] The bloody and calamitous game in the disarmed and so-called safe haven of Gorazde has entered a new phase and UN officials and the Serb criminals are trying to reap fresh fruit from the joint and coordinated game they have been carrying on.

While the calamitous deaths and the nightmare of the massacre of civilians have cast their shadow over the residents of the oppressed city of Gorazde, UN officials, the Security Council, and Western leaders are seeking a political solution for the crisis of the city of Gorazde, which is on the verge of falling. This is the West's new tactic in response to the world's rage and concern and the horrific nightmare the Gorazde residents are facing. It is a pattern of behavior on the basis of the new rule of acting and interfering after the tragedy. The objective behind this new tactic is to officialize the presence of the Serbs inside and around Gorazde and to delineate the political map of the area on the basis of its current military situation. And this will grant the Serbs the legitimacy they need.

Basically, the Serbs prefer to have Gorazde, on the basis of a political agreement, in the war, not as an aggressor to be confronted and with whom the people are enraged. The Muslims and the leaders of Bosnia too may have no alternative. This comes at a time when the world of Islam is silent and indifferent. In this case, the West and the United Nations and the Serbs will emerge victorious and respectable from this bloody and calamitous game.

With this new tactic, the West will achieve its political objective, which is the political crushing of the Muslims in Europe, in addition to the propaganda success that the Bosnian crisis was solved by politics. Once they dominate, occupiers, aggressors, and their mentors support political solutions so that they can thus legitimize their aggression and what they have gained through such solutions and portray confrontation with such solutions as illegitimate or doomed. The Westerners also hope to calm people with this game.

The Serbs too will achieve one of their most important military and political objectives and will gain full control of east Bosnia. Basically speaking, there could be no better condition than this for them to reap the political fruit of their savage military and inhuman crimes.

But behind this deceitful and bloody game, it is clear that even if the United Nations and the Western officials can apparently prevent the fall of Gorazde, they can no longer prevent the fall of the values of Western culture and of the prestige and credibility of the United Nations in the eyes of the world.

Gorazde today reminds the world of Islam of the tragedy of the fall of Andalusia into the hands of the crusaders and of the fall of holy Jerusalem into the hands of the Zionists and it will thus leave a great mark in the history that is in front of Islam and the West.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Zlenko Arrives in Tehran

LD1704132794 Tehran IRNA in English 1251 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 17, IRNA—Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko, arrived here Sunday at the head of a high ranking politico-economic delegation on a three-day official visit.

Zlenko, who is carrying a message from Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk for President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, was greeted at Tehran airport by his Iranian counterpart 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Talking to reporters upon his arrival, Zlenko, said he was here to further expand bilateral relations in various fields.

Zlenko said his visit provided a good opportunity for talks with Iranian officials on ways of consolidating and promoting bilateral relations and on issues of mutual interest.

Meets Velayati

LD1704172794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko, who has arrived in Tehran, met and conferred with our country's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati this evening. During this meeting, Zlenko announced his country's readiness to expand ties with Iran and said: The Ukrainian Government is ready to expand cooperation with Iran and wishes to see a bright panorama of the two countries' relations. Explaining the stances of his country in the face of the region's issues, he said: Ukraine is prepared to strive towards the region's stability within the framework of collective security.

Mr. Velayati, expressing satisfaction with the expanding trend of the two countries' ties, said: Cooperation between Iran and Ukraine not only meets the two countries' interests, but can also be a positive step towards revival of the regional countries' economy.

Also during this meeting the two sides exchanged views on the most important regional and international issues.

Meets President, Delivers Message

LD1804104794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today received visiting Ukrainian Foreign Minister Mr. [Anatoliy] Zlenko. During this meeting, the Ukrainian foreign minister handed over a message from Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk and said: Since independence, Ukraine has been willing to expand cooperation with the great country of Iran in all fields of mutual interests. He described the two countries' potential for strengthening closer ties as very favorable and added: Ukraine is ready to do its best to better utilize these potentials.

Our correspondent's report indicates that in return President Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed gratitude for the friendly message from his Ukrainian counterpart and expressed satisfaction for the promotion of ties between the two countries. He said: We believe our bilateral cooperation can be expanded beyond its present level, and thanks to the two countries' officials, the existing level of cooperation, which will serve the interests of the two countries and the world, should be further accelerated.

In his message, the Ukrainian president renewed his invitation to Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani to visit that country.

Comments on Cooperation, Bosnia

LD1804104694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Report on interview with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko by unidentified Central News Unit correspondent in Tehran; date not given]

[Text] In an interview with our correspondent, the Ukrainian foreign minister stressed the need for cooperation between Iran and Ukraine. He also stressed Ukraine's effectiveness in maintaining the interests of the peoples of the region. He said: The level of the two countries' economic relations is not equal to their economic resources, and experts from the two countries are to assess the expansion of such cooperation.

During the interview he also talked about the Ukrainian Government's policy on the destruction of its nuclear weapons and said: It has been decided that 200 nuclear warheads will be removed from Ukraine by the end of this year, and in its place Russia is to provide 100 tonnes of nuclear fuel for Ukrainian power stations.

The Ukrainian foreign minister also stressed the need to resolve the Karabakh dispute peacefully.

On the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, he said: Ukraine intends to send more forces to Bosnia to increase its cooperation with the peacekeeping forces already in the region.

Foreign Minister Velayati also talked with the Central News Unit correspondent. Referring to the willingness of the Iranian and Ukrainian Governments to increase their diplomatic and economic cooperation, Velayati said: During the talks, the Ukrainian foreign minister and I discussed bilateral relations and regional and international issues. He added: Ukraine asked the Islamic Republic of Iran to mediate for the release of the Ukrainian captives in Afghanistan, and we responded positively to that request and promised to continue our efforts in that respect.

Joint Economic Commission To Be Formed

LD1804105294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] Iran and Ukraine will form a joint economic and trade cooperation commission. This was announced this morning during a meeting between a Ukrainian economic and diplomatic delegation headed by Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko and our country's oil minister, [Gholamreza] Aqazadeh. The two sides expressed hope that the first session of the commission will review existing problems in the implementation of agreements which have already been signed between the two countries.

During the meeting Mr. Zlenko also announced his country's readiness to cooperate with the Islamic Republic of Iran in the fields of oil, energy, metals, transportation, and tourism.

Commentary Views Expanded Ties

LD1804154794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko arrived in Tehran on Sunday at the head of a high-ranking political-economic delegation on a three day official visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Soon after his arrival, Mr. Zlenko began the first round of his talks with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Part of yesterday's talks between the foreign ministers focused on regional and international developments and, as he had announced before his visit to Tehran, Mr. Zlenko showed he is willing to do his best for the expansion and strengthening of bilateral ties during his first official visit to Iran.

In view of the agreements concluded during the Ukrainian president's visit to Tehran and his meeting with Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani in April 1992, the Ukrainian foreign minister believes the present level of the two countries' ties is not compatible with the needs of the day and that, along with the two countries' political ties, the level of Tehran-Kiev economic exchanges should also be increased to higher and desirable levels.

Therefore, the composition of the political-economic delegation accompanying the Ukrainian foreign minister is so designed that, during the three days of talks in Tehran, all areas of mutual interest could be included, especially when Mr. Zlenko has come to Tehran with certain specific and clear proposals for the expansion of bilateral ties.

The Ukrainian foreign minister has laid real stress on the need for expanding bilateral cooperation in the fields of energy, steel, petrochemical industries, oil and oil refining, transport, geology and the training of the two countries' experts.

The Ukrainian foreign minister, in a detailed report on the latest developments in his country—especially Ukraine's views vis-a-vis the regional countries—stressed that regional security is actually a wide-ranging process, which can be attained only through security for all the regional countries. The emphasis the Ukrainian foreign minister places on this point means that, aside from expanding ties with Tehran, Ukraine is willing to cooperate with Iran on regional and international security.

On the whole, the trend of Iran-Ukraine ties during the two year period that has elapsed since the start of political and economic relations between the two countries and the outcome of the first round of talks between Dr. Velayati and Mr. Zlenko reflect the reality that the two countries, with due knowledge of their common interests, are moving ahead in consolidating the foundations of bilateral ties. This is not only to the benefit of Tehran and Kiev, but will also prove beneficial to the Caucasian region countries.

Downing of U.S. Helicopters in Iraq Analyzed

NC1604080594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Commentary by News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] The Iraqi skies, which have been and are still considered an arena for Western aircraft to engage in maneuvers and for flaunting their strength, turned into an sacrificial altar for these forces on Thursday and resulted in the deaths of 26 American, French, British, and Turkish servicemen. The incident took place when a squadron of American F-15 planes fired at and downed two military helicopters, killing 26 of its American, British, French, and Turkish crewmen.

This incident is noteworthy because, despite the West's ultramodern weaponry systems and technology, the degree of confusion among the human element and within the West's military establishments is such that the West was unable to prevent an incident that many experts have say could have been avoided.

It should be noted that most of the Western victims of the bloody Persian Gulf war and of the postwar incidents were victims of military mistakes committed by the Westerners themselves. Even though the West's military experts are trying to portray the recent mistake as a technical error and to blame the electronic systems in their aircraft, nevertheless the truth lies elsewhere—there is a state of psychological confusion being experienced by the West's military forces deployed in this part of the world.

Undoubtedly these forces are more victims of the political interests of their leaders than victims of sacred objectives or even of national interests. Thus, one cannot believe that the recent incident was a unique incident that will not recur. This incident speaks of a fundamental characteristic of these forces that has just begun to show, and it is not improbable that more Western forces deployed in the Persian Gulf will be added to the list of victims soon.

Saudi Government Urged To Remove Barriers to Pilgrimage

LD1804095594 Tehran IRNA in English 0908 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 18, IRNA—A morning daily here Monday called on the Saudi Government to prepare the necessary facilities for the Muslims to enable them to fulfill their religious obligations.

Referring to the 1991 agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia according to which some 115,000 Iranians could go for hajj pilgrimage each year, and holding of 'Bara'at' (deliverance from pagans) rally was accepted, the 'TEHRAN TIMES' said that Riyadh has unilaterally canceled the agreement and reduced the number to 61,600 for this year.

"The Saudi ruling family is governing a country that has a special status in the Islamic world," noted the paper adding that they should "understand the sentiments and philosophies of one billion Muslims who are not Saudi citizens but believed that the house of God belongs to all of them."

"It is in the Saudi's interest to facilitate Muslim's needs and provide them with security and accommodations," the article said. Muslims cannot sit idle and watch a government create obstacles to prevent them from performing their religious obligations, it added.

Pointing to the large number of the elderly Iranians who were in the waiting list to take a trip to Mecca and perform their religious duties, the paper said Iran has been "forced" to accept a reduced quota for this year's hajj.

It concluded by saying that to show good faith, the Saudi Government should help Muslims perform their hajj duties, including the Bara'at rally.

Iraqi Envoy on Expanding Ties With Iran

LD1604160094 Tehran IRNA in English 1437 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 16, IRNA—Iraq's charge d'affaires to Iran Hekamt 'Abd Khozayyer, here Saturday expressed his country's interest in expanding mutual ties with Iran.

He made the remark in a meeting with the Iranian deputy foreign minister for legal, consular and parlimentary affairs Manuchehr Mottaki.

Referring to the problems facing Iranians residing in Iraq, particularly jailed ulema and people, Mottaki demanded that the staff of Iranian consulate in Baghdad be allowed to meet them under the Vienna Convention.

Khozayyer promised to inform his country of the issues discussed at the meeting and to report back the results to the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Velayati Receives Vietnam's Deputy Foreign Minister

LD1504155894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] Vietnam's deputy foreign minister today in a meeting with Dr. Velayati in Tehran called for the expansion of cooperation in international circles and organizations.

Nguyen Dy Niem, who brought the Vietnamese president's message to Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in the meeting expressed hope that with the Vietnamese president's imminent visit to Iran, ties between the two countries will be further strengthened.

The Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign minister, Dr. Velayati, during the meeting pointed to the historical record of the Vietnamese combats against occupiers and said: The Islamic Republic of Iran places great significance on Vietnam.

Expressing Iran's readiness for hosting the Vietnamese president, Mr. Velayati said he is hopeful that the visit will have good foreign policy results for expanding the two countries' ties.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Opens Army Day Ceremonies

LD1804095094 Tehran IRNA in English 0915 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 18, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani opened ceremonies marking the Army Day at Tehran's Azadi Square Monday morning.

Addressing the participants, the president condemned the indifferent attitude that international bodies have adopted against crimes in the besieged Muslim town of Gorazde and stressed that the world was not seeking to defend the truth.

Those international organizations, he added, are seeking their own interests as they did in the course of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in which they intervened.

He congratulated the army personnel on the occasion and expressed hope that while the army is preserving its combat power it will also take part in the reconstruction effort.

Various units of the army later paraded before the president while the airborne parachute units performed operations and the aircraft flew in formation.

The army combat and cargo planes as well as helicopters performed operations during the ceremonies.

Also present at the ceremomies were Chief of Staff of Armed Forces Brigadier General Hasan Firuzabadi, Army Chief of Staff Major General 'Ali Shahbazi and a number of other senior army officials.

Chief Announces Army Ready for Joint Maneuvers With Neighbors

LD1704121294 Tehran IRNA in English 1115 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 17, IRNA—The Army Chief of Staff Major General 'Ali Shahbazi announced here today that Iran is ready to hold joint military maneuvers with its neighboring countries.

Talking to IRNA on the eve of the army day, April 19, he said that Iran is prepared to stage the proposed joint maneuvers in the waters of the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.

Iran will launch several sea, land and air milaitary exercises this year in order to keep up the defense power of the army, he said.

Shahbazi reiterated "Iran has neither got any non-conventional weapons of mass destruction, such as nuclear arms, nor does it intend to acquire them."

Referring to the great success of the Armed Forces in manufacturing spare parts as well as maintenance and repair of Army equipment, he said that Iran does not have any problem in repairing and maintaining its Army equipment including fighter jets, helicopters, vessels and missiles.

On the Army's role in the reconstruction of the country he said that the Army has so far undertaken around 45 huge industrial and development projects some of which have been completed.

Agreements on Debt Rescheduling Signed

LD1804071794 Tehran IRNA in English 0617 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] Tehran, April 18, IRNA—Despite U.S. attempts to sabotage a deal between Iran and its foreign creditors, Iranian officials have signed seperate agreements with the creditors for rescheduling the payment of about dlrs. 6 billion of the delayed debts.

Germany, Japan, Italy, Austria and Spain are among the major creditors to have agreed to reschedule the payment of Iran's debts.

Of the total dlrs. 6 billion of the resheduled debts, Iran owes dlrs. 2.6 billion to German banks, dlrs. 2 billion to Japan, dlrs. 800 million to Italy, dlrs. 458 million to Austria and about dlrs. 150 million to Spain.

Iran had already singed seperate agreements with Germany, Japan and France for rescheduling about dlrs. 4.5 billion of its debts to these countries.

The success of Iran in rescheduling the payment of its foreign debts is, on the one hand, an indicator of the importance that the European countries and Japan attach to Iran and, on the other, shows that the foreign trade partners are quite confident that Iran would have a prosperous economic future.

Pakistan

Bhutto on Nuclear Program, Kashmir, Foreign Policy

BK1604144594 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] The prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, has reiterated that the nuclear capability will never be rolled back and no stone will be left unturned to make the country's defense impregnable. The prime minister was addressing a meeting of the formation commanders at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi today. The prime minister said indigenous production will get due priority and we shall either induct additional F-16's or make alternate arrangements. The concerned agencies are exploring the market for induction of new tanks and we also intend to induct new submarines.

About foreign policy, the prime minister said what happened at Geneva proves beyond doubt the hollowness of the human rights crisis raised by the West. It also leaves no ambiguity that in the prevalent global climate strategic alliances are reshaped for better economic gains. She said we have to face this challenge and make our foreign policy more vibrant.

Spelling out the main achievements in respect of foreign policy, the prime minister said the Kashmir dispute has been revived as a live international issue in the United Nations and other international forums. This has been evidenced by statements of President Clinton and the UN secretary general. The International Committee of the Red Cross and foreign diplomats visiting the held valley had confirmed perpetration of continuing human rights violations in the wake of claimed transparency. Pakistan she said, is taking necessary steps to bring desired stability in the Afghanistan situation. The key to solution of the problems lies with the Afghan people. Ms. Benazir Bhutto said her government is endeavoring for the promotion of a new perception of Pakistan as an enlightened democratic Islamic and just state.

She made special reference to the revival of relations with the United States with particular reference to the depiction of Kashmir as a disputed territory by the United States and expression of concern about violation of human rights there and efforts by the Clinton Administration to maintain relations with Pakistan despite the Pressler Amendment.

About the promotion of relations with the Central Asian Republics, the Middle East and the neighboring countries, the prime minister said a solid breakthrough has been achieved.

Elaborating the economic achievements, she said foreign exchange reserves have improved from a precarious level of $300 million to $1.9 billion showing an unprecedented six-time increase. The prime minister said the government will miss no opportunity to seek rapprochement with the opposition to obtain a consensus on basic national issues like nuclear, Kashmir, long-term development projects like Kalabagh Dam and constitutional reforms. The prime minister expressed the hope that a sense of realization will soon prevail and the government will get the desired cooperation from the opposition in the best interest of the country.

Paying tribute to the armed forces, the prime minister said the professional and dedication in Pakistan Army is undoubtedly the envy of all and we are proud of our soldiers. She said the Army's sacrifices in the Sind Province are well known to all. The role played in holding free and fair elections last year was commendable.

Bhutto Leaves Lahore on 4-Day Visit to Germany

BK1804082894 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 18 Apr 94

[Text] The prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, left Lahore for Cologne on a four-day official visit to Germany. She is accompanied, among others, by the federal minister, Mr. Mohammad Yusuf Talpur; the Balochistan chief minister, Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Magsi; the special assistant to the prime minister on economic sector, Mr. Shahid Hasan Khan; the chairman of the Task Force on Social Contract, Mr. Kamal Asghar; and Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, MNA [Member of the National Assembly]. The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, who is now in London, will join the prime minister in Germany. The prime minister was seen off at the airport, among others, by the Punjab governor, Chaudhary Mohammad Altaf Hussain; the Punjab chief minister, Mian Manzoor Ahmad Wattoo; Pakistan People's Party Secretary General Senator Sheikh Rafiq Ahmad, provincial ministers, elected representatives, and senior officials.

During her visit, the prime minister will hold talks with German leaders on regional and international issues and on promotion of bilateral economic and trade relations. The prime minister will also brief the German chancellor, Mr. Helmut Kohl, on human rights violations in occupied Kashmir, as both the countries share their perceptions on the need for a resolution of Kashmir issue for peace and stability in the South Asian region.

Defense Minister Discusses Nuclear Program

BK1704121994 Islamabad THE NATION in English 17 Apr 94 p 12

[Text] Sukkur (NNI)—Federal Minister for Defence Aftab Shaban Mirani has said that Pakistan does not intend to build the nuclear bomb but, at the same, we would never disband our muclear programme.

Talking informally to newsmen at his residence here on Saturday, he strongly refuted speculations that any deal had been struck with the US on the issue.

He said Pakistan would never accept outside pressure on a matter related to our country's national security.

He blamed the Opposition's negative role in playing up the issue as "childish".

He also categorically ruled out reduction in the national defence budget and added "We had a traditionally aggressive enemy on our borders which had exploded a nuclear device as far back as 20 years ago and was only increasing its defence budget". "How can we ignore this build up?, he asked. [no end quotes as published]

He said that Pakistan would continue to strive for declaring our region as a nuclear-free zone.

Deaths, Injuries From Kashmir Explosions Reported

BK1504162394 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 Apr 94

[Text] Reports from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir say two persons have been killed and 12 injured in six powerful explosions in different parts of the territory. Agencies add that the blasts were the result of intergang clashes among militant outfits.

Danish Defense Forces Chief Visits Kashmir Control Line

BK1604091994 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 16 Apr 94

[Text] Denmark's defense forces chief, General (Jorgen Maine), who visited (Pando) Post along the Line of Control [LOC] in Azad Kashmir, was briefed on the situation in occupied Kashmir and the increasing violations of the LOC by Indian forces. He was accompanied by General Shamim Alam Khan, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. The Danish general was also apprised of the large-scale violation of human rights at the hands of the Indian forces in occupied Kashmir. He was told that infamous laws have been enforced in occupied Kashmir, under which the Kashmiris have been deprived of their basic rights. The Indian judiciary is not allowed to hear any case relating to any crime committed by the Indian forces against the Kashmiris. The Danish general was also informed that India has deployed a large number of troops along the LOC to prevent the helpless refugees from coming into Pakistan from India. He was also told about the unprovoked violation of the cease-fire, as a result of which civilians living along the LOC are being killed. The Danish general also attended a briefing at the field station of the UN observers in Muzaffarabad.

Kashmir Party Denies 'Secret Negotiations' With India

BK1704093094 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] The executive council of the All Parties Hurriyat Kashmir Conference at its meeting in Muzaffarabad today reviewed the latest political situation prevailing in the occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The council strongly rebutted Indian claims that the leadership of the conference was engaged in secret negotiations with the Indian authorities. The council said this is a technique used to mislead the Kashmiri people, which are engaged in relentless struggle against repressive measures of Indian forces in occupied territory. The council said that the Kashmiri people will not be affected through such unfounded and fabricated media tricks aimed at spreading disinformation. The executive council of All Parties Hurriyat Conference called upon the Kashmiri people to step up their struggle against Indian subjugation till their rights are achieved.

Leghari Views Political, Economic 'Stability'

BK1704085994 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 17 Apr 94

[Text] The president, Sardar Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, has said the country is heading toward political and economic stability and there is no uncertainty looming large on the national horizon. He was talking to newsmen after addressing the second convocation of the Qaide Azam University in Islamabad today. The president pointed out that political affairs are being handled well and macroeconomy is being managed in a better way. He dispelled any impression of uncertainty and said there is no cause to worry on this account.

Addressing the convocation, the president called for giving a revolutionary and missionary fervor to education to usher the nation in the 21st century. The president said we should give high priority to education and it should be made purposeful to attain technological and vocation expertise. He said collective efforts are needed for this purpose. He lauded the efforts being made by the present government to assign priority to education.